

Braille Monitor



AUGUST, 1984

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

PUBLICATION OF THE
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

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THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND IS NOT AN ORGANIZATION
SPEAKING FOR THE BLIND—IT IS THE BLIND SPEAKING FOR THEMSELVES

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CONVENTION 1984

The 1984 convention of the National Federation of the Blind was held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Phoenix, Arizona, during the first week of July. The meeting was characterized by satisfaction and unity, a sense of well being, and confidence that what needed to be done would be done. The mood was not one of complacency but of certainty. The delegates came to discuss problems and goals and to plan for the future, and they did what they came to do. They played and socialized, worked extremely hard, and went away feeling that the organization was on the right course and able to keep its commitments and meet its needs. It was one of the best and most fulfilling conventions we have ever had.

Activities got underway early, with many of the delegates arriving by Friday, June 29. We completely filled the Hyatt, as well as most of the rooms at the Ramada and the San Carlos—nearly a thousand rooms. The business sessions, the banquet, and many of the larger group and committee meetings were held across the street at the Phoenix Civic Plaza. The facilities were among the best we have ever had. From beginning to end it was as close to an ideal convention as one is ever likely to find.

In this and succeeding issues of the Monitor we will give the details and point up the highlights. Here we only summarize. A constitutional amendment was adopted expanding the Board of Directors from fifteen to seventeen, the

five constitutional officers and twelve additional board members. Kenneth Jernigan of Maryland was re-elected President for a two-year term. Don Capps, who had the longest period of continuous service on the Board, was (because of health) unable to stand for re-election as First Vice President. Mr. Capps was at the convention and presided briefly during the presidential election, but he made it clear that his activities would have to be curtailed at least for the next few months. There was a genuine outpouring of affection for Don Capps, a recognition of the dignity and integrity which have always characterized his behavior and a demonstration of real love. He left no doubt that he intends to be as active as he can in the immediate future and that he plans as soon as possible to return to full productivity.

Diane McGeorge of Colorado was elected First Vice President, and Peggy Pinder of Iowa was chosen Second Vice President. Rami Rabby of New York was elected Secretary, and Dick Edlund of Kansas was returned as Treasurer. All of these positions are for two-year terms.

The following people were elected to two-year board positions: Steve Benson of Illinois (who, by the way, brought with him to the convention a new bride—a lovely and accomplished attorney), Charles Brown of Virginia, Ronald Byrd of Texas, Glenn Crosby of Texas, Robert Eschbach of Ohio, and Joyce Scanlan of Minnesota. The terms of the following persons expire in 1985: Sid Allen of

West Virginia, Dr. Norman Gardner of Idaho, Allen Harris of Michigan, Theresa Herron of New Hampshire, Ralph Sanders of Maryland, and Fred Schroeder of New Mexico.

At the board meeting Tuesday morning, July 3, Peggy Pinder (Chairperson of the Scholarship Committee) introduced the scholarship winners. There were twenty of them—eight to receive \$500 scholarships, one to receive a \$1,500 scholarship, and eleven to receive \$2,500 scholarships. The Scholarship Committee met on Thursday evening, July 5, to make the final decision, and the awards were presented on Friday evening at the banquet. Not only did the winners receive scholarships but also their expenses to the convention. It was the cream of the crop of the blind scholars of America. Next year's program will offer more, bigger, and better awards. With the increasing difficulties which blind students are experiencing with rehabilitation the scholarship program is becoming one of our most important activities.

Resolutions adopted at the convention set the policy of the organization for the coming year. Many important resolutions were adopted but none of more far-reaching effect than Resolution 84-101, which said in part: "Be it resolved ... that (in the discretion of the President and the Board of Directors) a program to make low interest business and job related loans to qualified blind persons be established by the Federation.

"Be it further resolved that (as resources permit) not only small loans in the two or three thousand dollar category be contemplated but also substantial loans in the hundred thousand dollar and higher category, the purpose being to conduct the loan program in

such manner that it can become a major factor in helping the blind achieve independence and first-class citizenship." This resolution was enthusiastically and overwhelmingly adopted. Along with the other resolutions, it will be printed elsewhere in this issue.

In recent years we have recruited an increasing number of members at large. Just as members of affiliates are asked to contribute by joining the PAC (Pre-Authorized Check) Plan, so members at large are asked to become Associates, contributing \$10 or more each year to the national Treasury. There is a contest each year to see what Federationist can recruit the most Associates from July 1 through the end of the following May. The winners were announced at the board meeting Tuesday morning. Those who had recruited from 1 through 9 Associates (all 235 of them) were awarded white ribbons. The 25 people who had recruited 10 through 29 Associates were given red ribbons. Five people (Verla Kirsch of Iowa, Kenneth Jernigan of Maryland, Jim Omvig of Maryland, Betty Capps of South Carolina, and Alan Glickman of Illinois) received blue ribbons, given to those who recruit between 30 and 49 Associates. Nine people recruited 50 Associates or more and received red, white, and blue ribbons. Allen Sanderson (the Bear) of Alaska received first prize of \$1,000 for recruiting 445 Associates; Bill Isaacs of Illinois received second prize of \$500 for 270 Associates; Karen Mayry of South Dakota received third prize of \$200 for recruiting 172 Associates; and Tom Stevens of Missouri received fourth prize of \$100 for recruiting 139 Associates. The other winners of red, white, and blue ribbons were Marsha

Crickmore of Indiana, 83 Associates; Wilmer Simms of Texas, 61; Dottie Neely of Missouri, 53; Darrel Nather of Alaska, 50; and Sharon Gold of California, 50.

Marc Maurer, the Chairperson of the PAC (Pre-Authorized Check) Plan Committee, reported to the Tuesday board meeting and throughout the remainder of the week. The efforts of the Committee were evident by the mounting number of pledges. By the end of the convention there were 1,049 PAC pledges with an annualized aggregate of more than \$261,000. It is evident that our movement means enough to the blind that the members are willing to make sacrifices to finance it.

The Human Services Division, the Student Division, and the Scholarship Committee conducted a seminar on Saturday, June 30, as did the Parents Division. The Merchants Division also conducted a seminar; and the convention concluded on Sunday, July 8, with a JOB (Job Opportunities for the Blind) seminar.

During the week there were a number of other seminars and many group and committee meetings. There was a cane travel workshop, a training session for interpreters for the deaf-blind, and one of the biggest and best displays of exhibits we have ever had. There were many demonstrations of new technology, announcements of jobs available, and all of the varied activities that we have come to expect from a convention of the National Federation of the Blind. One of the activities that attracted special interest was the inauguration and initial meetings of the newly established National Association to Promote the Use of Braille (NAPUB). Betty Niceley (3618 Dayton Avenue, Louisville, Kentucky

40207) is NAPUB's President, and we believe the organization will do much to improve the quality of the production of Braille and to increase its use.

The first general session of the convention occurred Wednesday, July 4. We were welcomed by NFB of Arizona President Art Dinges and NFB of Arizona First Vice President Bruce Gardner. The Mayor of Phoenix was present to speak to the convention and proclaim National Federation of the Blind Month. A proclamation was read from Arizona's Governor declaring July NFB Month throughout the state.

During the remainder of the week the convention heard a report from President Jernigan concerning the activities of the past year, listened to an address by United States Senator Dennis DeConcini, and participated in one of the most interesting and informative programs we have ever had. The banquet was one of the best ever. It was videotaped in its entirety, as was much of the rest of the convention. The Mistress of Ceremonies at the banquet was Mrs. Ramona Walhof, who did a superb job. The Jacobus ten-Broek Award was presented to Karen Mayry for the outstanding work she has done in building the South Dakota affiliate.

Among other highpoints of the week were the following: the item on the National Charities Information Bureau (printed elsewhere in this issue), the report from the National Library Service, the address by Gerald Kass (head of the Jewish Braille Institute of America), a discussion of Braille by Geoffrey Bull of Triformation, Jim Hudson's report on the challenges and possibilities of his new job as Director of Arkansas' programs for the blind, Marc Maurer's analysis of the problems we are having with the airlines (along with the

follow-up comments from the Federal Aviation agency and a representative from Delta), the report from the Social Security Administration by Associate Commissioner Nelson Sabatini, perspectives on civil rights and its enforcement by Antonio Califa (the Director of the Policy and Enforcement Service for the Office of Civil Rights in the United States Department of Education), and the address by Congressman Jim Bates on equal treatment for the blind in insurance. There were also such outstanding items as the address by Ramona Walhof entitled "Rehabilitation for the Blind: Patterns, Problems, and Options," and the address by Peggy Pinder detailing her work as an Assistant County Attorney.

The violation of the civil rights of the blind of Missouri and Idaho (and, in a broader sense, of us all) was pointed up by a presentation Wednesday afternoon. Marc Maurer and Fred LeClerc, who is a Professor of Constitutional Law at the University of Tennessee, are handling the Missouri and Idaho cases and they led the discussion. Tom Stevens and Dr. Norman Gardner talked of their personal experiences.

As he introduced the Missouri and Idaho matter President Jernigan said: "As I introduce the next item on the program, I want to bring to your attention what I call the Patton principle, named for General George Patton of World War II distinction. 'Patriotism,' General Patton said, 'does not mean dying for your country. It means making the son of a bitch on the other side die for his.' Although we are not involved in the kind of battles which claimed the attention of General Patton, and although we would certainly not want to

reflect on the ancestry of our adversaries, the Patton principle has relevance for us as a people and a movement. As a matter of long-standing policy we never engage in conflict unless every other avenue for solving the problem has been explored and found closed and unless the principle is so important and the issue so critical that the matter cannot be allowed to go by default. Why? Because when we engage in conflict (even if we win, win quickly, and win big), we still take damage and hurt. However, once we enter a conflict, two things follow: First, we are willing (both personally and organizationally) to make whatever sacrifice and pay whatever cost may be required to achieve the objective; but second, we have no intention of being slaughtered. We will give that honor to our opponents. That is the Patton principle, and we understand it and live by it."

The Wednesday afternoon session concluded with a stirring address entitled "I Have Come Too Far to Turn Back," which was delivered by Ronald Byrd, Personnel Management Specialist and Equal Employment Opportunity Administrator, United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Dallas, Texas. As has already been noted, Ronald Byrd was later elected to membership on the national Board of Directors. Another item of interest and comment was entitled "Computer Talk and Technology: What's New? What's Coming?" This was a panel discussion featuring Dr. Tim Cranmer, our Director of Research and Development; Roger Sax, President, AVOS, Inc., St. Paul, Minnesota; Deane Blazie, President, Maryland Computer Services, Forest Hill, Maryland; and Curtis Chong, Computer Tech-

nical Support Specialist, IDS/American Express, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

On Friday morning, July 6, Nila Stovall of the Employment Standards Administration of the United States Department of Labor talked with us about sub-minimum wages in sheltered shops. This item was arranged by Jim Gashel, our capable Director of Governmental Affairs, who not only participated in various segments of the program throughout the week but also gave a full length Washington Report on Saturday morning, July 7.

During the Saturday session a discussion occurred as to whether the Federation should establish a national rehabilitation center or seek some other alternative. The fact of the general deterioration of rehabilitation services for the blind during the past few years gave particular significance to the deliberations. No final, long-term solution was agreed upon, but the process of decision making was set in motion; and interim steps were suggested. It is clear that a need exists and that the blind themselves must take the lead in causing the need to be met.

It has often been remarked that the National Federation of the Blind is not so much an organization as a people's movement, a cross section of the blind population of America working together and helping each other. The old, the young; the rich, the poor; the employed, the jobless; the educated, and the unlettered participate. Our conventions know the joys and sorrows of the everyday events of human life.

On Saturday afternoon, July 7, we had a death in the convention hall. Sam and Gertrude Sitt of Florida have been Federationists and have attended the con-

ventions for many years. Gertrude was seriously ill, but she urgently wanted to attend the Phoenix convention. She came to the sessions and participated as she could. Late Saturday afternoon (just as the convention was drawing to a close) Gertrude went as she would have wanted to go, quietly falling to sleep at the end of a wonderful experience. Sam bore his grief with quiet self-composure, and his fellow Federationists rallied to him for support.

There was also a birth at the convention. Joanne Fernandes, the energetic and intrepid President of the NFB of Louisiana, was determined to come to the convention. Her baby was past due, but the convention is the convention—and Joanne is a Federationist. At about one o'clock on Wednesday morning, July 4, Joseph and Joanne Fernandes became the proud parents of Jennica Shanti. (Shanti, incidentally, means peace in Hindu.) At the Roll Call of States (less than nine hours later) Louisiana was called, and Joanne Fernandes stood up to answer. The audience gave her a roaring ovation. When President Jernigan asked her who would serve on the Nominating Committee from Louisiana that evening, Joanne replied in a matter-of-fact tone: "I will." And she did. She worked through the remainder of the convention; and as of this writing, mother, father, and baby Jennica are doing well.

Just before the start of one of the general sessions, John Knall (one of the leaders of the Federation in Ohio) came to the platform and introduced to President Jernigan Mr. Leo Carver, who was undoubtedly the oldest Federationist present. He was 95, but it was evident that he was lacking in neither vigor nor

zest for living. President Jernigan asked him to say a few words on the microphone, and his steady voice boomed out to urge people to come to the convention of his 100th birthday to help him celebrate. On a sadder note, we have learned that shortly after the convention John Knall suffered a stroke and was hospitalized in Lakewood, Ohio. It is hoped that he will soon be sufficiently recovered to return home.

The Phoenix convention will be long

and happily remembered. It symbolizes a mature organization—knowing what it wants, knowing what it can reasonably expect to accomplish, and determined to achieve its objectives. The blind of America have come of age. We have reached maturity and have taken our destiny into our own hands. No better example of that truth can be found than the 1984 convention of the National Federation of the Blind.

PRESIDENTIAL REPORT

Delivered by

KENNETH JERNIGAN

President, National Federation of the Blind

At the Annual Convention

Phoenix, Arizona, July 4, 1984

In 1982 and also in 1983 I began my report by saying to you: "This has been a year of severe challenge, tremendous accomplishment, and unbelievable acceleration." Today I say to you that the present year has witnessed even greater triumphs and (if possible) greater challenges.

One way to measure our progress is by the increasing amount of recognition we are receiving from public officials throughout the country. This year more governors declared National Federation of the Blind Month, Week, or Day in their states than ever before in history. Legislatures and mayors also gave recognition to our movement. Beginning

at the time of last year's convention, the Governor of Missouri (as you know) declared July National Federation of the Blind Month. In September the Senate of the state of New Hampshire passed a resolution commending the NFB. October was declared National Federation of the Blind Month by the Governors of Nebraska, New York, Massachusetts, Kansas, and Michigan. October 1 was declared National Federation of the Blind Day by the Governor of Rhode Island, and October 15 was proclaimed National Federation of the Blind Day by the Governor of Arizona. November 13 was made National Federation of the Blind Day by the Governor of Pennsylvania, and March 11 -

18, 1984, was proclaimed National Federation of the Blind Week by the Governor of Oregon. In April the pace picked up again, with National Federation of the Blind Month proclamations by the Governors of New Mexico, Virginia, and Louisiana. In May a similar action was taken by the Governor of South Dakota, and the Governor of Oklahoma declared May 16 - 23 National Federation of the Blind Week. In Connecticut, California, South Dakota, Minnesota, and New Mexico the Governors issued White Cane proclamations commending and giving recognition to the Federation.

In public ceremonies in Baltimore on October 9, 1983, the Attorney General of Maryland presented to the Federation a citation from the Governor of Maryland commending us for our work. I cannot begin to mention all of the mayors, city councils, and other public bodies that have done likewise, and even as it is, I have probably omitted some of the governors.

In last year's report I told you that Jim Gashel and I had gone to the office of the Vice President of the United States for a meeting to discuss issues and problems. A measure of how far we have come since then can be seen by an event which occurred on October 24, 1983. At five o'clock that afternoon a group of Federation leaders were standing in the West Wing of the White House waiting to see the President of the United States. With us was the entire Idaho congressional delegation. We went into the Oval Office and spent fifteen minutes with President Reagan. The conversation was substantive, dealing with issues of importance to the blind. The President listened attentively to what we had to say; and although I am

not totally satisfied with the follow-up, such a meeting inevitably brings not only added stature but also positive results. What other organization dealing with the blind has been in the Oval Office in the last few months for a face to face talk with the President of the United States?

During the past year we have made greater progress than ever before in getting our message to the public through the media. The October 1, issue of Vital Speeches carried the 1983 banquet speech—"Blindness: The Other Half of Inertia." Vital Speeches goes to every college and university in the country and to many of the nation's high schools. It goes to most of the Fortune 500 corporations. It is the most prestigious magazine in its field. In the same issue with our banquet speech were speeches by President Reagan and Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko.

On October 2, 1983, station WRNO in New Orleans began broadcasting our weekly series of thirty-minute radio programs called "The Pioneers." WRNO has a power of three million watts. It covers the United States and most of the rest of the globe. It is rated as having the largest audience of any non-government radio station in the world.

On November 14, 1983, National Public Radio began distributing the same series of programs on the West Star Four Satellite. Since our program is put on the satellite each Monday evening immediately following "All Things Considered," which is one of the most popular NPR productions, we are in prime time. Both the NPR and the WRNO broadcasts of our "Pioneers" series have been aired each week since they were started last fall, and there is every prospect that this

will continue.

As you know (for you have made it happen by contacting local stations), our public service radio and television spots now saturate the airwaves. Not only are our messages used on local stations but they are also carried by most of the networks. On October 24 one of our television spots appeared on the CBS program "AFTERMash." At that time "AFTERMash" was rated in the top ten for the size of its audience. Our spots have also appeared on "Good Morning America" and "60 Minutes."

On November 30 Peggy Pinder and Barbara Pierce appeared for an eight-minute segment on the television program "Hour Magazine." Used by 160 television stations, this is one of the most popular daytime t.v. shows in the country. Peggy and Barbara were flown to Los Angeles for the filming, and they obviously made an extremely positive impression. In less than two hours after the program was broadcast we received in the National Office more than forty calls from throughout the nation. I might say here that the appearance on "Hour Magazine" is a testimonial to our efforts at public education at these national conventions, for the people at "Hour Magazine" became interested in us because of news clippings from our 1983 meeting in Kansas City.

On April 13 of this year we were featured on the "Today" Show. We had eleven minutes to tell our story to one of the largest television audiences in the nation. The program featured video tapes of Fred Schroeder and Peggy Pinder performing on their jobs and discussing the accomplishments of the blind, as well as the public attitudes and misconceptions with which we deal. Then, in

the New York studio, I was on live to talk about the Federation and our philosophy. This was an unparalleled opportunity to carry our message to an audience of millions. I am informed that advertisers pay more than a thousand dollars a second to get their message on the "Today" Show. We got ours on for eleven minutes free.

Most of the remodeling and upgrading of the facilities at the National Center for the Blind is now behind us. We have a headquarters for our activities second to none in the nation. Our Center stands as a testimonial to our independence and our determination. It also gives evidence of our ability to plan, our sense of purpose as a movement, and our willingness to sacrifice. The National Center for the Blind does not belong to any governmental or private agency. It belongs to the nation's blind. It is ours. We built it, and we know where the money and the effort came from. The blind take a tremendous pride in the National Center; and on a continuing basis state affiliates, local chapters, and individuals come to tour, to buy aids and appliances, to get literature, and to examine and discuss the programs.

Of course, our physical assets are only as valuable as the work we do to secure the rights and improve the quality of life of the blind, and that is where our efforts are concentrated. Last year I told you about Jane Kessinger. She lives in a small community not far from Columbus, Ohio. She is blind. Her husband is sighted. A year ago, as we were meeting in Kansas City, the Kessingers had been denied the right to adopt a three-year-old child even though the youngster had lived with them

from the age of six months. When the Kessingers sought to adopt, the social services agency intervened and took the child away from them. The reason was Jane Kessinger's blindness, nothing more. In Kansas City I said: "We intend to win this case." I am pleased to tell you that we have won it. The child is back in the home, and I think there will be no more trouble. We arranged for an administrative hearing and brought blind parents from throughout the country to testify. This is what Federationism is; this is how we spend our money; and this is why we are unstoppable and unbeatable.

Let me tell you about Karen Horton. She lives in Little Rock, Arkansas. She came to us to ask for help only a few months ago. Karen is divorced from her former husband Ronald, and they have a child named Eric. Both parents are blind. The divorce occurred in Alabama. Naturally the question arose as to who should have custody of the minor child. Would it be Karen, the blind mother; or Ronald, the blind father? Perhaps it will not surprise you to learn that neither parent was allowed to have the child. Custody was awarded to the grandparents on the father's side, both sighted. Even worse, the divorce decree specifically provides that when either of the child's parents has visitation rights, that parent (because of blindness) must provide for sighted supervision of the child at all times. In other words neither blind parent is allowed to be alone with or care for or fondle the child without a sighted person's presence and surveillance.

All of this is bad enough (in fact, most of us would find it intolerable), but there is more. Both of these blind

parents agreed to the settlement under these terms and signed the court papers denying them custody, based on blindness. They signed the papers and agreed that neither of them will supervise or have care of their own child because they are blind. That is humiliating and bitter medicine to swallow—and I often ask myself how many others there are out there just like these two. Yet, there are still people who ask me why we need a National Federation of the Blind. Do you believe for one moment that if either of these blind parents had been Federationists at the time these papers were presented to them they would have agreed to such an arrangement? The decision in this case may still be reversible. We are doing our utmost to help Karen Horton obtain the custody of her child and the right to care for that child without sighted supervision, but how much better it would have been if she had never agreed to the degrading arrangement in the first place! It is situations like this which make you know why we need and must have (regardless of the cost) the National Federation of the Blind.

Let me turn now to the workshops. Two cases involving our right to organize in sheltered shops are now pending before the National Labor Relations Board. The Arkansas Lighthouse case started in the spring of 1981 when several blind workers in Little Rock began to talk with us about the possibility of having a union. The confrontation has been long and bitter. A vote was taken at the Lighthouse on July 10, 1981, and because of the pressure from Lighthouse management, the union narrowly lost. So we made an appeal, charging unlawful conduct by the Lighthouse management. A

year ago the regional director for the National Labor Relations Board ruled in our favor, overturning the election because of illegal conduct on the part of the Lighthouse, and ordered collective bargaining to begin. Last July the Lighthouse appealed to the full National Labor Relations Board in Washington. The Board's decision should be made soon, and we think we will win; but even if we do, the Lighthouse can still appeal to the courts.

In other words we are fighting a battle which has been both expensive and long and which is far from over—but we intend to win. It is hard to convey the reality of the abuse and pain which our blind brothers and sisters in the sheltered shops have endured year after year and decade after decade while the shop management paid themselves extremely well and held themselves out to the public as benefactors of the blind—but that time is rapidly coming to an end. We are organized and strong in the land—and we are no longer willing to submit to being herded like cattle or treated like slaves.

Blind workers at the Raleigh Lions Clinic for the Blind are among the latest to move toward independence. A hearing was held last July immediately following our convention, and we won it hands down. The decision of the regional director of NLRB followed the precedent of Chicago, Houston, Cincinnati, and Arkansas. Management made the now familiar argument that their workshop is not a place of employment but only a rehabilitation facility, with a little therapy thrown in for good measure. The NLRB made the now familiar response. The Raleigh Lions Clinic is a business substantially engaged in com-

merce. An election was ordered for August 25, 1983, but on August 24 the NLRB in Washington decided to hear an appeal from the workshop. The election was allowed to proceed as scheduled, but the NLRB impounded and sealed the ballots pending the Board's decision as to whether they should be opened and counted. This is the same procedure which occurred in the Houston case several years ago. Let us hope the outcome will be the same.

We have filed an amicus brief in support of the blind workers. The General Council of Workshops for the Blind has also intervened, filing a brief in support of the shop management. Workshops throughout the country were asked to contribute funds to help pay to file the brief to fight the workers. As last year's congressional hearings show, it is not always easy to tell where the money comes from to hire the lawyers to try to keep the blind from organizing; but we know who financed our effort. It was done by the blind themselves. We can do what we have to do and raise the money we have to raise to bring ourselves from second-class citizenship to first-class status in society. Let those who doubt it put the question to the test. Regardless of the decision in the Raleigh case, an appeal to the courts is almost inevitable. Let it come. We are ready.

Then, there is Morristown. That case started a year ago and lasted only a few months. It may set a record for speedy action and complete victory by the blind. The workers were threatened, discouraged from joining the National Federation of the Blind, and told they could not even write to their congressmen and senators. As you know, we

responded with vigor. Each of the blind workers who filed unfair labor charges against the Morristown shop received a settlement of \$500, but that was only part of what they got. By order of the National Labor Relations Board a notice was posted in the break room of the shop. The notice read in part:

"WE WILL NOT interrogate our employees concerning their protected concerted activities.

"WE WILL NOT prohibit our employees from writing letters to congressional representatives, nor will we direct them to cease talking about writing letters to congressional representatives.

"WE WILL NOT threaten our employees with discharge in order to discourage them from writing letters to congressional representatives.

"WE WILL NOT restrict telephone privileges of our employees in order to discourage them from engaging in protected concerted activities.

"WE WILL NOT threaten our employees with plant closure in order to discourage them from engaging in protected concerted activities.

"WE WILL NOT in any like or related manner interfere with, restrain or coerce our employees in the exercise of their rights to self-organization, to form, join, or assist the National Federation of the Blind, or to engage in other protected concerted activities with other employees for the purposes of collective bargaining and other mutual aid and protection....

"This notice must remain posted for 60 consecutive days from the date of

posting and must not be altered, defaced, or covered by any other material."

That is a message which speaks loud and clear to every blind shop worker in this country. We have the right to organize, and anybody who cares to dispute it must face the National Federation of the Blind. That is the lesson of Morristown.

How many years have we had to fight for the rights of blind shop workers in Houston and Cincinnati? But the battle was worth it, and the victory is sweeter for the delay. In Houston we have a labor contract—the first of its kind ever to be signed in this country. It was finalized last September and provides for wage increases of at least twenty-six percent over a four-year period. There are guarantees of a forty-hour work week and vacation and sick leave arrangements. You can read the details in the Braille Monitor for January of this year. If the blind workers in Houston can get fair treatment through collective bargaining and membership in the National Federation of the Blind, then so can the others throughout the country—and we are here to help make it happen.

A contract has now been negotiated and ratified by the shop workers in Cincinnati. The Cincinnati shop workers are strong. They rejected the first contract offer and prepared to call a strike. Then (and only then) the management of the Cincinnati Association for the Blind got the message and began to bargain seriously. The contract is a good one. There will be wage increases,

paid holidays, paid vacations, bonuses, and a health insurance program—and all of this for the first time in the shop's history. And still, I hear some people wonder why we need a National Federation of the Blind. Ask the shop workers. They can tell you.

One more thing about the sheltered shops: As you know, we stimulated congressional hearings in the spring of 1983. Last fall the report of the congressional committee was released. The committee found that the spending of money by National Industries for the Blind to oppose organizing by shop workers is an unacceptable activity and specifically called it a "grave transgression of proper administrative judgment." So NIB is now ordered to keep its hands off of labor disputes in sheltered workshops. Many people have worked together to make all of this progress in the shops possible (that is the way a movement like ours functions), but three names require special mention: Dick Edlund, Jim Gashel, and Ralph Sanders.

There have been developments in the vending program. First, the Lester Davenport case is at an end. It began early in 1982 when the Tennessee Valley Authority (a federal agency) told the state agency for the blind in Tennessee that Lester Davenport must be removed as the blind vendor at the Sequoyah Nuclear Power Installation near Chattanooga. We intervened, but the Tennessee agency would not listen. Lester was not only to be removed from the location in question but was to be ousted from the program entirely. His vending facility was one of the best in the state. At the hearing in 1982 we lost, and Lester's license was revoked. He was out of the

program and unemployed. The hearing was held before an employee of the state agency, so the results are not surprising. However, we took the case to arbitration. Hearings were held last year.

In March of this year we got the decision. The state of Tennessee was ordered to reinstate Lester Davenport as a blind licensee in the Tennessee Business Enterprise Program—and to do it immediately. For two years (which began running in March of 1984) Lester is given priority over any other vendor in the state to be assigned to any vacant vending facility.

We have had another victory on behalf of two blind vendors in Indiana—Alex Sheppard and Betty Weddle. They operated a vending facility in the post office in Evansville. In August of 1983 they were told that they would be removed by direction of the postal service and were ordered to vacate the vending facility by September 1. Both Alex and Betty are active members of the National Federation of the Blind, so they do not meekly bow to pressure. We helped them file an action in the federal court. Marc Maurer was their attorney. There was a consent decree not to remove Alex Sheppard or Betty Weddle from their vending facility pending all administrative appeals, including arbitration if necessary. They had originally been denied their right of appeal. Most important of all, the vending facility was not closed on September 1 as ordered by the post office and the Indiana state agency. Alex and Betty are still on the job. It would not have happened without Federation intervention. This is how we spend out money and our effort.

George McNabb is a member of our

Arkansas affiliate and a vendor in Little Rock. His case is a classic example of state agency backroom dealing in handing out promotions to better vending facilities. In this case Louis Rives—former Director of the Arkansas agency and also former President of the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped (NAC)—decided not to give George McNabb a promotion to either of two vending facilities for which he had seniority and qualifications. Jim Gashel served on the arbitration panel. The panel, in a unanimous vote against the state agency, found that Reeves' decision not to consider George McNabb for the vending facilities to which he was entitled violated Arkansas regulations. Even the state agency representative on the panel was compelled to vote for George McNabb. The promotion process administered by Mr. Rives was blatantly biased so that friends and cronies could get the choice assignments.

The panel issued its ruling on December 29, 1983. The ruling is historic in nature. Whenever either one of the facilities to which George should have been promoted becomes vacant, he shall have the right to have it, regardless of how long it may be before the vacancy occurs. As an interim step, the arbitration panel has awarded George McNabb a continuing right to promotions anywhere in the vending program of Arkansas during 1984. In other words he may move to any vending facility in the state which becomes vacant prior to that facility's being offered to anyone else. Already he has almost quadrupled his income. At the end of the year he may return to the arbitration panel to re-

quest back pay or other relief. How different it would have been if there had been no strong National Federation of the Blind.

Early this year, in violation of the Randolph-Sheppard Act, the General Services Administration made an effort to lease cafeteria space in its buildings to fast food chains. The provisions of the GSA proposal made it impossible for blind vendors even to bid, let alone have the preference which Congress intended. To qualify, a bidder would have to have food service establishments in at least five states. It was clear that the entire Randolph-Sheppard program in federal buildings was in serious jeopardy.

A bid opening for the food operation in the main GSA building was scheduled for three o'clock on the afternoon of February 1 of this year. Our annual March on Washington occurred at the same time, and we served notice on GSA that we would ring its building with pickets if the bid opening proceeded. There were hundreds of our members in Washington, and GSA decided to reconsider. The decision was conveyed to me personally in a letter sent to my home by federal courier on Friday night before the beginning of our March on Sunday. The letter, which was reprinted in the Braille Monitor, left no doubt that it was the work of the National Federation of the Blind which brought GSA to a rational perspective concerning its fast food ideas.

As to the future, we have asked the Secretary of Education to withdraw and revise the rules which currently permit GSA and other governmental property managing agencies to use bids for awarding their cafeteria space, and over

one hundred members of Congress have joined with us in making the request. The decision now rests in the hands of Madeleine Will, Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitation Services of the federal Department of Education. Whether she will have the courage and the motivation to do what is needed, I cannot say. Her decision has not been announced. As one might expect the American Council of the Blind has advocated that no change in the rules be made "at this time." It is difficult to comprehend how any vendor (or any other blind person, for that matter) can fail to understand that the National Federation of the Blind is the most forceful, able, and resourceful advocate for the rights of blind persons in the country today and that the Federation is the only real hope of the blind for true independence and first-class citizenship.

We have continued to work with state agencies and vendors in developing new and improved regulations for the various state programs. This was done last fall in South Carolina at the request of the vendors, the state affiliate, and the state Commission for the Blind. The process worked well, and the South Carolina Commission for the Blind sent a letter of thanks to the National Office. The vendors and the state agency in Maryland have also been working to establish rules for the vending facilities program. Last fall the state agency prepared a set of rules. With our assistance the vendors of the state made and prepared an alternative set of rules. When a member of the American Council of the Blind wanted to know why the Federation was asked to participate officially in the negotiations con-

cerning the adoption of rules this spring, an official of the state rehabilitation agency (a person, I might add, who is no particular friend of ours) explained that it was only the National Federation of the Blind which cared enough to rewrite the state's proposal. Therefore, it seemed only fair. The negotiations are now underway and seem to be going well. There have been many other cases concerning vendors, but time simply does not allow a complete listing. For instance, we helped Charlie Erickson with a court case involving the cafeteria he was running at the Oscar Mayer plant in Perry, Iowa. In the court settlement he received an award of \$10,000 in damages. The Iowa Commission for the Blind refused to help him. We could, and we did.

Now, let me say a few words about JOB (Job Opportunities for the Blind), the program which we operate in conjunction with the United States Department of Labor. Throughout the nation we have over 6,000 employers on our register for contact and to receive material. We have conducted four JOB seminars since the first of January, and since the beginning of the program we have helped at least 435 blind persons find competitive employment in jobs paying more than the minimum wage. JOB is a program in which we can take pride. Not only has it helped blind persons with jobs and dignity but it has also improved the climate of public opinion and set the stage for future opportunity.

We are now engaged in a battle of gigantic proportion to protect the rights of blind persons in Missouri and Idaho. The outcome will have consequences for the blind of today and the next generation. You will hear more

about this battle later this afternoon, so I will only say here that when state officials can (like common criminals) break into blind persons' desks and steal their personal property—when former policemen (turned state investigators) can team up on a blind single parent and threaten her with the loss of her job because she makes contributions to the Federation or attends its meetings on her own time without their permission—when staff members of the agency for the blind can be assembled and ordered (on pain of losing their jobs) not to discuss anything about the so-called "investigation" (or even its existence), with each other, with the media, or with civil rights organizations—when minor state functionaries can so prostitute their trust as to claim in writing that the National Federation of the Blind is a "militant" and suspect organization because it dares to provide canes and other aids and appliances to the blind—and when these functionaries are taken seriously instead of being locked up in a madhouse—we have no choice but to respond in full measure. We have responded. We have taken the Missouri and Idaho officials to court, and before we have finished, we also may be bringing action against some of the traditional opponents of the right of the blind to organize—people who may be the real behind-the-scenes instigators of these gestapo tactics and acts of insanity. The point to make here is that we have taken our case to the courts and the public, that we know the battle will be long and expensive, and that we intend to prevail. If the day comes when we are not willing (indeed, anxious) to stand forth and fight such tyranny, we not only dishonor

our heritage but we no longer deserve to be called the organized blind movement. Never fear: We know what it means to be Federationists—and we will be there.

I am pleased to report to you that the litigation which was necessary to protect our name and our organization in the state of Iowa is at an end and that we have achieved complete and total victory. The Appeals Court and the Supreme Court have said that our original position was right and have given us everything we requested. The splinter group which was trying to keep our funds and use our name has already given back more than \$30,000 to the rightful affiliate and has now been held in contempt for not completely carrying through on the court's order. On May 18, 1984, judgment in the amount of \$15,678.01 was entered by the Iowa court personally against Sylvester Nemmers and others in his group who, as the court put it, "willfully, contemptuously, and fraudulently" violated the court's order. You can read the details in this month's Braille Monitor. Let those who try to deprive us of our rights contemplate the court decision in Iowa. It speaks to our determination to be free, our right to organize and function as a movement, and our ability to defend ourselves and achieve our goals.

Last year I mentioned Paul Flynn. He taught for twenty years in a church-operated school in Baltimore with a consistent record of excellent evaluations. In the fall of 1982 a new principal came on the scene. He said that a blind person could not teach, that it was sacrilegious and a danger to the students. In the spring of 1983 Paul was fired. We appealed through administrative channels and the ecclesiastical court. The

recent decision was even worse than might have been expected. The court not only upheld the firing but had the effrontery to say that (purely as a matter of charity—and this is the very word the judges used) Paul Flynn, who they said had worked so courageously under such tremendous odds, should be given \$2,100—a hundred a year for his faithful service. Paul isn't having any of it, and neither are we. We are appealing to the regular civil courts, and we intend to win.

As I have said, we are dealing with too many cases even to mention. There is the matter of the health club which is receiving our attention because it refuses to admit blind persons to membership; there are the numerous cases involving discrimination which are now being litigated in the courts or being dealt with by administrative negotiation or appeal; and there are the ongoing battles with the airlines to try to get them to treat us like other paying passengers and like human beings. There are the cases involving the denial of social security or other benefits to elderly blind persons, the Supplemental Security Income and disability cases involving younger blind people, and the many other matters which we are able to settle before they ever come to formal hearing.

Of course, we continue to work on the legislative front. As an example, we now have a bill in Congress called the Fair Insurance Coverage Act (HR 4642). The sponsor is Congressman Jim Bates of California. He will be at this convention on Friday to speak. The bill is designed to give to the blind protection against insurance discrimination anywhere in the country. Even though about

half of the states have enacted rules or laws based on a national model we helped develop several years ago, there are still patterns of discrimination against the blind in the insurance industry. This is our bill. We drafted it, along with Congressman Bates.

On June 27 we had a hearing before a House Subcommittee, and a number of Federationists from across the country testified—including Joyce Scanlan, Mary Bishop of Ohio, Louis Lucero of California, Fred Schroeder of New Mexico, and David Dawson of Virginia. Jim Gashel, Jim Omvig, and Ralph Sanders also testified. We have in the neighborhood of 120 co-sponsors in the House. This takes work, and it brings results.

This year we are greatly expanding our program of assistance to blind college students. At this convention we are awarding twenty scholarships, the majority of them in the amount of \$2,500 each. The scholarship winners were provided with financial assistance to come to the convention, and they are with us today. We will do still more in this area in the years ahead. The blind youth of the nation are our challenge and our hope for the future.

This is by no means all, but it is a representative sample of the past year's work. It shows what can be done with an extremely small staff; a relatively limited budget; and a tremendous amount of dedication, determination, and volunteer labor. We have expanded the distribution of our magazine, the Braille Monitor. It goes to every Congressional office and to every agency doing work with the blind in the country. It is read by most of the active blind of the nation. The Monitor is beyond question the most influential

publication in the field today.

During the past year we have sent out from the National Office hundreds of thousands of print, Braille, and recorded items dealing with the blind. This is in addition to the Monitor and to the JOB publications. We have established a committee not only to study but to develop and bring into production new technology for the blind. We have provided at very low prices talking clocks, talking calculators, new travel aids, and other aids and appliances.

When you look back over the past year, you cannot help but feel joy and satisfaction at what we have accomplished. Yes, there have been problems and battles, but what an absolutely wonderful year we have had! We have kept the faith with Dr. tenBroek and the other founders of our movement, and we have kept the faith with ourselves. We have lived the dream and fulfilled the promise.

I want to conclude by renewing with you our mutual pledge and commitment to each other. I have said to you before (and I now repeat) that there is a bond of understanding between the members of this organization and the President—between you and me. You expect me to stand forth on the cutting edge of

progress and do what has to be done to lead the movement. You expect me to be in the thick of the battle and not to shrink from unpleasant tasks. You expect me to meet attacks and not compromise our principles. All of this I am prepared to do to the best of my ability. As long as you choose to have me as your President, I will lead as wisely, as firmly, and as lovingly as I know how to lead. And make no mistake: As long as I am President, I intend to lead. I believe you would as quickly dismiss me for failure to act as you would for acting unwisely—and I think you would be right. This is what I believe you expect from me, and I gladly give it, without reservation and to the best of my ability.

In turn, you have a duty to me, and to the movement. If I am to stand in the front of the battle and take whatever comes in the way of personal abuse and attack, I need (indeed, I must have) your support, your encouragement, and (yes) your love and understanding. Together we have built a mighty movement, and together we shall go on to equality and first-class status for all of the blind. This is our mutual bond, our pledge of commitment to each other and ourselves. This is the National Federation of the Blind.

SECOND OPEN LETTER**FROM: KENNETH JERNIGAN****TO: CHARITABLE AND PHILANTHROPIC
ORGANIZATIONS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC****SUBJECT: QUESTIONABLE PRACTICES OF
THE NATIONAL CHARITIES INFORMATION BUREAU
19 UNION SQUARE WEST
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10003****(FORMERLY NATIONAL INFORMATION BUREAU
419 PARK AVENUE SOUTH
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10016)****JULY, 1984**

Early in May we sent to charitable and philanthropic organizations and the general public an Open Letter concerning the practices of the National Information Bureau. Our Open Letter was documented with facts detailing highly questionable practices by NIB, and apparently it touched an extremely sensitive nerve.

Within a matter of days we received a veritable avalanche of letters and telephone calls commending us for our courage in speaking out, asking for additional copies of the open letter, and offering to provide data and by of any other possible assistance. Many of those who called or wrote indicated that they were making multiple copies (sometimes by the hundreds or thousands) and sending them on to others. Some said that they would like to do what they could to help but they would appreciate having their names kept confidential because of fear of reprisal. Others

said that, regardless of the consequences, the time had come to stand forth and be counted. A great many said that if we wished to call a meeting of interested organizations to discuss the problems involved in what constituted reasonable public accountability, the difficulties caused by self-appointed standard setters such as the National Information Bureau, reasonable codes of ethics for philanthropic groups, and similar matters, their chief executive officers or other top personnel would welcome the opportunity and would like to be present. Such a meeting is now being considered and may be called.

Shortly after the distribution of our Open Letter I was contacted for comments by a representative of one of the publications in the field in connection with a story he intended to write about our Open Letter and other matters involving the NIB—or, as it now calls itself, the National Charities Information Bureau.

I talked with him without reservation and provided him with such information as I had, telling him that he was free to print any of the data I gave him.

Next I learned that Mr. M.C. Van de Workeen (who had completely dominated the NIB for many years) had all of a sudden "resigned" as Executive Director of the organization. There was a great deal of mystery and hush-hush about the matter, and members of the NCIB board vehemently denied that he had been fired. They even more vehemently denied that our Open Letter had had anything to do with the business, this despite the proximity of the two events. Members of the NCIB board, according to my sources, refused to discuss the "resignation" with the media; and when they could not avoid discussion, they pointed to Mr. Van de Workeen's retention as a "Senior Consultant" as proof that he had not been fired.

As I said to one of the members of the press: Suppose you had been President of the United States. Suppose further that there had been talk that you were being forced out. Then, all of a sudden, you "resign." When leaders of the Congress and the Cabinet are asked if it is true that you were forced out, they reply: "Of course not. Our proof is that he is staying on at the White House as a 'Senior Consultant.'"

Our sources tell us that the National Information Bureau is in serious trouble and that its board is virtually in chaos. We have heard that Mr. Van de Workeen is threatening to come out with an 'expose' concerning certain officials of United Way and that many of those officials are equally unhappy with him, while a number of the NCIB board members are unhappy with all concerned.

Then, there is another matter of serious impropriety. The National Information Bureau has been attempting to work with the National Association of Attorneys General to develop a model state law and model state regulations to control and make uniform the reporting and other actions of charitable philanthropic organizations throughout the country. It is highly questionable whether a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization like the National Information Bureau should help develop and administer state regulations to control other tax-exempt organizations, not to mention itself. After all, the NCIB is supposedly required to meet state regulations and report like any other organization.

Moreover, there is the question of NCIB's competence to work in the area of assisting states and developing their laws and regulations. In a letter this spring from an NCIB official the following passage appears:

"As you know, some months ago, Lorraine M. Sheehan, Secretary of State of Maryland, invited the National Charities Information Bureau (NCIB) to assist in the review and revision of Maryland's laws and regulations pertaining to charitable solicitations. NCIB agreed to do so.

"As part of its technical assistance, NCIB reviewed Maryland's charity-related law and regulations, together with a sampling of those of other states including New York, New Jersey, and Massachusetts. This review lead (sic) to discussions with leaders in the private sector and a number of state charity officials..."

As knowledgeable people in the field know, the Maryland charitable solicitations law was recently struck down by

the United States Supreme Court in the Munson case. One wonders whether Maryland officials were really benefited by having the assistance of Mr. Van de Workeen and the NCIB. One also wonders how much of the initiative for NCIB involvement came from Maryland and how much from NCIB.

Not only ethical but also legal questions are raised when a private organization such as NCIB begins to assume the function of state action. When such an organization engages in "state action," our legal counsel advises that the organization loses certain immunities it would have as a purely private entity and takes on some of the liabilities and responsibilities of state agencies. If, for instance, one of the philanthropic organizations which feels it has been damaged by unfair treatment from NCIB should bring a lawsuit, it probably would not have to prove malice to recover. There are other serious legal exposures (not to mention messy publicity) which may well be involved both by NCIB and the state officials involved.

Be that as it may, we personally have no doubt that our Open Letter triggered the firing (not resignation) of Mr. Van de Workeen, and we believe the tide of public reaction is only beginning its long, tumultuous rise. We can see absolutely no reason (and we believe an increasing number of individuals and organizations share that belief) for the continued existence of the National Charities Information Bureau. What service does it perform? What good does it do to counterbalance its obviously harmful behavior?

Under date of June 20, 1984, I sent to Mr. Lloyd B. Gottlieb, Chairperson,

National Charities Information Bureau, a letter (copy attached as Exhibit A). Under date of June 22, 1984, Mr. Gottlieb wrote to me (copy attached as Exhibit B). It will be observed that Mr. Gottlieb does not respond to the principal questions raised in my letter and that he does not acknowledge Mr. Van de Workeen's "resignation." Could it be that he wrote before receiving my letter of June 20? Could he have received it and backdated his reply for appearances? Could he have received it and simply not have acknowledged the fact? Who knows—and in the final analysis what difference does it make? He clearly indicates the state to which matters have got by requesting a meeting. Will he now say that he does not wish to have a meeting, much along the lines of his comments about Mr. Van de Workeen's not attending our convention? It will probably make little difference.

As I told one of the members of the media, we are willing to meet with him if he thinks any useful purpose will be served, but when he realizes that we doubt the worthwhileness of the very existence of NCIB and that there is no way to frighten us off, he may well decide it is not worthwhile to meet with us.

At our national convention in Phoenix several thousand of us met in general session at the Phoenix Civic Plaza. Mr. Van de Workeen was not present, so in the full glare of cameras and lights we placed an empty chair on the table beside the podium to symbolize Mr. Van de Workeen and proceeded with our speech and discussion. A copy of the formal address is attached as Exhibit C. It will be seen that (although it condenses and summarizes some of the former revel-

ations—it brings new facts to light. Perhaps in ending this Second Open Letter I can do no better than conclude with an excerpt from an eloquent letter we received from the Executive Director of a small not-for-profit organization. I will not identify him for fear it might bring NIB retaliation on his group:

"... it is my conclusion," he says, "that the NIB constitutes a malign force in the charitable world. It prevents rather than encourages the emergence of charitable groups that depend on small contributions by less-well-off individuals. It stifles advocacy groups, either by refusing to rate them or by subjecting them to more stringent standards than appear to be applied in the case of other groups.

"... unless charity is something to be run only by and for the rich, it seems to me important that the NIB revise its standards so as to permit the emergence of constituencies that will serve (and be supported by) persons who are not wealthy."

If you have comments on the research we have done and the revelations we have made, we would be pleased to hear from you. If you wish to reprint this material and circulate it, you are free to do so. We believe that the general public has a right to know and that all of us in this field have an obligation to help make that right a reality. We would welcome any data you can provide us or any thoughts which you would like to share with us. We may soon contact you again to see whether you would be interested in attending a meeting to plan concerted action to give the public full and complete information and to eliminate from our field false and misleading

reporting.

EXHIBIT A

Baltimore, Maryland

June 20, 1984

Dear Mr. Gottlieb:

This letter is written to you in your capacity as Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the National Charities Information Bureau to inquire whether the letter dated May 2, 1984, which we received over the signature of Mr. M.C. Van de Workeen represents the official policy of the Board of Directors of the National Charities Information Bureau. If it does, we would appreciate your confirming that fact to us. If it does not, we would request that you provide us with an official Board response to our document entitled "Information and Disclosure Requested from National Information Bureau, March 19, 1984." For your convenience we are enclosing a copy of our request for information and of Mr. Van de Workeen's response to it under date of May 2, 1984.

As you may know, Mr. Van de Workeen was scheduled to speak at our national convention in Phoenix at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Thursday morning, July 5. In view of the fact that he has now "resigned" as Executive Director of NCIB I would assume that it would no longer be appropriate for him to appear. In fact, in the circumstances his views as a private citizen or as a "senior consultant," to the NCIB—which, as I understand it, is his current position—would be of questionable relevance. It would seem to me that we would do well to schedule other items for that partic-

ular time period.

EXHIBIT B

Mr. Van de Workeen's "resignation" still leaves unresolved the question raised at the beginning of this letter. Therefore, I would appreciate your response to it.

New York, New York
June 22, 1984

Very truly yours,
Kenneth Jernigan, President
National Federation of the Blind

P.S. You will note that Mr. Van de Workeen states: "...NCIB's practice is to respond fully to any additional questions or requests for information required by those authorities whose purpose it is to review charitable organizations such as the NCIB."

It is the purpose of the National Federation of the Blind to review the activities of any and all organizations affecting the lives of blind persons. Since the National Charities Information Bureau attempts to influence the funding and general credibility of many programs for the blind, it itself becomes an organization affecting blind persons, thereby coming under the purview of our regular evaluation and monitoring activities.

cc: Members of the Board of NCIB for whom we have addresses

Dear Mr. Jernigan:

Prior to the publication of your Open Letter with regard to the National Charities Information Bureau, Mr. Van de Workeen had agreed to speak at your convention in July in the spirit of fairness and to answer questions posed to him. It would appear now that no useful purpose would be served by Mr. Van de Workeen's presence and accordingly he will not attend your convention.

We do not agree with the representations made in your Open Letter. However, I do think it is important for a meeting to occur between volunteer members of our respective Boards and staffs, where we can discuss the concerns that each of us may have.

Please get back to me so that we can arrange a mutually convenient time.

Sincerely yours,
Lloyd B. Gottlieb, Chairperson
National Charities Information Bureau

**NATIONAL CHARITIES INFORMATION BUREAU:
WHAT AND WHY
ANALYSIS OF NCIB**

by Mary Ellen Anderson

Several months ago the National Federation of the Blind began a thorough investigation of the policies of the National Information Bureau (which now calls itself the National Charities Information Bureau). Many of you, as well as several thousand others, have read the document containing the preliminary results of that investigation. For those of you who have not, it is available on cassette and in print at the literature table in the exhibit hall. The document was issued only after Mr. M.C. Van de Workeen and the National Information Bureau refused to make full and fair disclosure concerning their financial and program operations.

It has become clear to us that the National Information Bureau fails to act with objectivity or fairness or to meet its own published standards for charitable and philanthropic organizations. Since NIB has tax exempt status as a charitable organization under section 501(C)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, we believe it should follow the same "standards" by which it purports to evaluate other philanthropic organizations. NIB has repeatedly made the following statement in writing: "In order to determine that an agency meets NIB's eight basic standards, NIB requires that the agency supply, on request, reasonable evidence of its compliance with those standards. NIB expects responsible organizations to sup-

ply such information." This is what NIB says, and we are not only concerned about the fact that it does not practice what it preaches but also about the nature of the reports that it publishes about charitable organizations. We have now received quite a number of NIB reports on widely divergent kinds of organizations, and we intend to receive more such reports as part of our ongoing investigation of NIB. The pattern we have found is not reassuring.

So far, the National Information Bureau has not "met its own definition of responsibility," or, at least, Mr. Van de Workeen has not. We have now written to Mr. Lloyd B. Gottlieb, the Chairman of Mr. Van de Workeen's board and to other NIB board members asking them if the "answer" (or perhaps it should more properly be characterized as the "non answer") which we received from the National Information Bureau over Mr. Van de Workeen's signature truly represents NIB's position with respect to public disclosure, accounting practices, conflicts of interest, and the like or is merely a further reflection of Mr. Van de Workeen's personal feelings. Incidentally, one of the items of information which Mr. Van de Workeen has repeatedly declined to provide us has been the addresses of NIB's board of directors, insisting, instead, that all communications with board members be filtered through him. The National Fed-

eration of the Blind, on the other hand, routinely provides the complete mailing addresses of its entire board of directors in publicly available registration reports it makes to the various state regulatory agencies. However, today it is Mr. Van de Workeen we are dealing with, and I hope he has not come to lecture us with a series of canned cliches about standards and public accountability of charitable organizations. We have heard all of the cliches before from his NAC colleagues. I use the term "colleagues" advisedly—for as we learned in our investigation of NIB, Mr. Van de Workeen is a member of NAC's Commission on Accreditation. We say to Mr. Van de Workeen what we have repeatedly said to NAC: We believe in standards and public accountability. What we want to know, in view of the clear evidence to the contrary, is what relevance do the activities of your organization have to standards and public accountability? Why, we want to know, do you believe there is value in circulating highly excerpted financial reports (often with data distorted and out of context) when the complete audited financial statements of the organizations on which you are reporting are freely available to the public through the state governmental regulatory agencies? Why do you make meaningless and unreasonable classifications of items such as a penny being "unordered merchandise" while seals which cost more are not? How can you claim objectivity when you fail to disclose as an integral part of the reports you issue your own obvious conflicts of interest? In answer to our letter of inquiry you said: "Each year the members of NCIB's Board of Directors and staff file a conflict of

interest form with the secretary of the corporation. These are used by NCIB to avoid conflicts of interest in relation to NCIB actions, including reports about organizations." Do you seriously believe that this reply deals adequately with the question of conflict of interest? To whom are these "conflict of interest forms" available? Are we to assume that they are as publicly available as many of the rest of the details of NIB's operation—which is to say that they are not available at all?

We indicated in our Open Letter that we were troubled by the religious bias exhibited by NIB in its report on the Christian Record Braille Foundation and the comments which were made about the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, its beliefs, and its connection with the Christian Record Braille Foundation. We now learn from our research that you, Mr. Van de Workeen, hold graduate degrees in religion and have spent more than a dozen years of your career as a minister and administrative officer in a church of another faith.

Presumably these facts (and who knows what others) are tucked away somewhere in your so-called conflict of interest form on file with NIB's corporate secretary. What use, I ask you, is NIB's conflict of interest file to the reader of NIB's reports?—the reader, who is told that you are providing him or her with a "Wise Giving Guide!"

I have already said that Mr. Van de Workeen holds a high level position in NAC's hierarchy—a fact which he conveniently withheld from us during a lengthy correspondence dealing with the lack of objectivity in NIB's published report on the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually

Handicapped. Apparently Mr. Van de Work-
een feels that his "conflict of interest
form" on file with the secretary of NIB
takes care of the matter.

Mr. Van de Workeen, the members of
this organization have known a lot about
NAC for a long time. We have been learn-
ing a lot about you and the NIB in a
short time. We are accustomed to shabby
behavior by self-proclaimed guardians of
the public good. Your reporting prac-
tices concerning the American Foundation
for the Blind and NAC fall into this
category. Here are the facts: No current NIB report on the American
Foundation for the Blind is available.
In 1980 NIB listed the AFB as not meet-
ing its standards. We have attempted to
obtain a copy of that report. We are
told that we may not have it because (as
you put it) the report "is being up-
dated." We note that in May of 1981 the
report was being updated, the same for
May of 1982, and May 1983—and we must
presume the same is true for May of
1984. Telephone contact with NIB offi-
cials elicits the response that there is
no scheduled time when the report will
be made available, that it has not been
"too long a period" since a report did
exist, and that "no, it is not possible
for us to send you the last report we
had because it is our policy never to
release information that is outdated."
We find it interesting to note that at
the same time we were denied a copy of
NIB's 1980 report on the American Foun-
dation for the Blind we were provided a
1976 report on the Sierra Club and a
number of 1980 reports on other organi-
zations.

We have obtained financial data on the
American Foundation for the Blind from
the New York Department of State Chari-

ties Registration Section—the same
source NIB uses for many of its
reports—and from the Foundation's own
published annual report. Having done
so, we can see why NIB's report has been
so long in coming. A mere five minutes
with a calculator reveals that the Foun-
dation cannot meet NIB's published
standards regarding fundraising costs as
a percentage of related contributions, a
program consistent with the organiza-
tion's stated purpose and its personnel
and financial resources, and ethical
publicity and promotions excluding exag-
gerated or misleading claims. In 1982
the American Foundation for the Blind's
fundraising costs as a percent of direct
mail contributions were 69.1 percent.
In 1983, these fundraising costs were
47.5 percent. In 1982 the American
Foundation for the Blind had current
unrestricted funds available in the
amount of \$25,267,223, and in 1983 it
had \$28,140,487. The amounts expended
in those years were \$10,310,607 and
\$10,732,841 respectively. In 1983 an
additional \$292,922 was utilized for
property and equipment acquisition from
unrestricted funds. This amounts to a
consistent practice of accumulation of
excess funds well beyond the published
standard allowed by NIB. NIB's three
year delay in issuing a report on the
AFB should be contrasted with its pub-
lished comments regarding accumulation
of funds in the reports of two organiza-
tions of which it disapproves: "Because
of Father Flanagan's Boys' Home's (FFBH)
available assets and total support/rev-
enue from sources other than contribu-
tors," NIB says, "FFBH's continued soli-
citation of 'contributors' support for
current programs raises a question with
regard to NIB standard #5." And, "Ques-

tion is raised with regard to NIB standard #3 as to Dakota Indian Foundation's apparent accumulation of assets and as to whether this method of accumulation in past years fulfilled the purpose for which contributions were solicited and received." The latter comment is made in connection with the accumulation by the organization involved of less than a half million dollars. But, of course, it is easier to take on a small Indian organization in a Western state than it is a 28 million dollar next door neighbor—especially when that 28 million dollar neighbor provides more than 50 percent of the funding to a favored "pet" organization in which M.C. Van de Workeen holds a prestigious sounding official position.

Let us look now at precisely how NIB deals with that "pet" organization, the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NAC). NIB's NAC report begins with the incredible statement that, "The National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped (NAC) is 'the' standard-setting and accrediting body in work with the blind." This statement goes beyond the bounds of misleading innuendo. It is a direct falsehood. It is widely known that the highly regarded Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) accredits agencies for the blind. Certainly this fact is known by M.C. Van de Workeen, who is no mere outside observer but a member of NAC's Commission on Accreditation. In view of these facts, it is difficult to accept NIB's explanation that it, in effect, accidentally closed the quotation in the wrong place.

Next NIB describes in glowing declara-

tory statements NAC's highly controversial view of itself—that "It strengthens and improves the services and management of organizations for the blind, and it gives blind people and contributors a way to identify those agencies and schools that are achieving maximum effectiveness." NIB uses no quotation marks, no qualifying "NAC states that it ..." But simply the bold, unsupported assertion of this astounding value judgment as fact. Naturally, the assertion is unaccompanied by any disclosure of NIB Executive Director Van de Workeen's position with NAC.

We have earlier mentioned that NIB disapproves the Blinded Veterans of America—stating, in effect, (among other things) that it questions BVA's right to exist. It devotes a full page and a half of its report to challenging BVA's estimate of the number of blinded veterans—the implication being, of course, that BVA inflates its estimate of the number of blinded veterans in order to build a more compelling case for the need for its services.

As one would expect, however, NIB fails to comment on NAC's manipulation of statistics. The generally accepted number of agencies and schools serving the blind in the United States is approximately 500. As a matter of fact, NAC itself used this figure for many years. However, years passed (NAC has now been in existence for almost twenty years) and eighty percent of the organizations in the field had never thought enough of NAC accreditation even to bother applying for it. The statistics became an embarrassment. Unable to attract more applications for accreditation, NAC did the only thing it could to create more favorable statistics. It

suddenly began claiming that there are only 400 agencies and schools eligible to receive accreditation and presto it can report (in June 1981) that it has accredited 21 percent of those eligible, rather than the actual 17 percent it would report if it used the generally accepted statistics.

NIB states that "NAC is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as the reliable authority as to the quality of training offered by special schools for the blind." It fails to disclose the termination of NAC's federal funding and the reason for that termination. [If it did disclose that NAC's federal funds were cut off, it would undoubtedly parrot NAC's usual whitewashed version of the reason for the cut—that the grant period had simply ended—However, we have the Appropriations Committee report and the underlying correspondence on the matter, if anyone cares to see the documentation.]

If one retained any lingering doubts concerning the objectivity of NIB's report on NAC, those doubts would vanish after reviewing NIB's financial analysis of NAC. NIB reports that NAC received total contributions in 1981 of \$307,769 including \$205,000 from the American Foundation for the Blind and that NAC's fundraising expenses as a percentage of contributions are 10.5 percent. It makes no other comment.

It does not mention that readers should consider whether a so-called "independent" accrediting organization which consistently receives more than 50 percent of its public support from another foundation (in this case 67 percent of its unrestricted contributions as reported by NIB) can adequately maintain its independence. It does not

mention that NAC fails to disclose its financial dependence upon the American Foundation for the Blind in its published annual reports, providing only one lump figure labeled "contributions."

The public might also be interested in knowing something about the fundraising practices of the American Foundation for the Blind since NAC receives such a large proportion of its contributions as a kind of pass-through from the Foundation. Perhaps NIB might say that "In 1982 NAC received 67 percent of its total public support from the American Foundation for the Blind, which had a fundraising cost of 69 percent of direct mail contributions. The AFB's fundraising expense as a percentage of direct mail contributions does not meet NIB standard #4. In addition, the American Foundation for the Blind does not meet NIB's standard regarding excessive accumulation of assets, having available for current unrestricted use in 1982 in excess of 25 million dollars, representing substantially more than twice its annual operating budget." The public might indeed, like to have such information, but it will not get it from NIB.

Similarly, it does not produce the desired result for NIB to apply its "standard financial analysis" to NAC's 1981 financial report. Therefore, it simply does not do it. As indicated earlier, it reports (without comment) a fundraising cost of 10.5 percent of "contributions."

It is instructive to look at the way NIB says it evaluates fundraising costs: "... the cost of fundraising," NIB says, "should not be more than 30 percent of the funds raised. In many cases, reasonable fundraising costs should amount to much less than 30 percent of the

total raised ... under some circumstances an overall percentage of 30 percent may be too high. This might be true in the case of an organization that receives most of its contribution income in large grants from a few donors. Three million dollars would clearly be too much to spend to obtain ten million dollars from a thousand donors. The average gift would be \$10,000 and the average cost of obtaining each gift would be \$3,000!"

What happens to NAC's 1981 fundraising costs when the methods of analysis are applied which NIB frequently uses (particularly, when it suits NIB's desire to show an organization in an unfavorable light)?

If only the data presented in the NIB report is used, one would subtract the \$205,000 grant given by the American Foundation for the Blind from NAC's "contributions" of \$307,769. It is reasonable to assume that virtually no fundraising costs are attributable to obtaining this grant since the Foundation has a longstanding commitment to prevent the financial collapse of NAC. Moreover, AFB staff and board members have consistently sat on NAC's board.

Therefore, if one uses what NIB claims to be its usual method, NAC's fundraising costs are found by determining what percent \$32,415 is of \$102,769. The answer is 31.5 percent—which is, of course, slightly in excess of NIB's published standard of 30 percent.

However, when data supplied by NAC to the New York State Department of Charities Registration Section (again, a method frequently employed by NIB when it wishes to discredit an organization) is used, the picture becomes radically different. There we learn something

that we cannot learn from NIB's report—that NAC had not only the large grant from the AFB but \$117,979 in additional foundation and trust grants and only \$22,819 in "contributions from the general public," and \$1,000 in bequests.

Calculating NAC's fundraising costs as a percent of "contributions" yields a fundraising cost of 142 percent! When we calculate the fundraising costs for contributions and bequests combined we get a figure of 136 percent. It becomes painfully obvious why NIB did not employ its usual analysis, and why NIB reported "contributions" were "general contributions" rather than disclosing the total amount of foundation and trust grants.

Mr. Van de Workeen, I hope you have come here prepared to talk to us in specifics about why you feel that you can justify that report as being objective because it seems pretty obvious to us (and as the responses to our open letter pour in, apparently to most others, as well) that there are serious lapses of ethics at the National Information Bureau.

It seems that NIB not only employs a "double standard" in the reports it issues about other organizations, but it also has a "triple standard" for itself. For some inexplicable reason, Mr. Van de Workeen apparently feels that the reports NIB makes to the state and federal governments (along with NIB's own published annual report) provide all the data the public needs about NIB and feels that NIB is obligated to provide no further data except if asked to do so by governmental authorities. Yet, Mr. Van de Workeen says this is not enough for other organizations and that they must give him data when he asks for it. Here it is in Mr. Van de Workeen's own

words:

"... it is the practice of the NCIB to provide to all inquirers a copy of its latest annual report which contains information about NCIB that NCIB requests from national agencies and includes in NCIB reports about those agencies. Also, when requested NCIB makes available a copy of its Annual Report to the New York Department of State, including NCIB's Federal Form 990. Accordingly, in response to your request for information, I am enclosing NIB's printed 1982 Annual Report and Annual Report—Charitable Organization for year ended December 31, 1982, to New York State Department of State."

Incidentally, we already had those documents, and he knew that we did since they were the ones which gave the data that we questioned in the first place. Mr. Van de Workeen goes on to say:

"... it is NCIB's practice to complete and file the necessary forms required by all governmental authorities regulating charitable organizations. Also, NCIB's practice is to respond fully to any additional questions or requests for information required by those authorities whose purpose it is to review charitable organizations such as the NCIB."

"It is my understanding that the review of charitable organizations is not the purpose of National Federation of the Blind. Accordingly, it is NCIB's practice not to reply to extensive and detailed questions from general inquiries about information in our printed annual report."

It seems to us, Mr. Van de Workeen, that you cannot have it both ways. Either the government regulatory reports provide adequate information to the public (which of course, we think they

do—that is why they exist and since they are governmental rather than private, there are built-in protections against abuse and discrimination), or they don't. If they do, we fail to see that NIB provides any useful service to society at all—in fact, as you know, we think it serves its own private or your personal ends and does a great deal of harm.

At times it almost seems, Mr. Van de Workeen, that you forget that NIB is not a governmental authority. You speak of "those authorities whose purpose it is to review charitable organizations such as the NCIB." What do you mean by that language? We know of no "authority" NIB has. You are a private organization, performing a private function, and serving private interests. You have a self-perpetuating board of directors responsible to no one, and no organization has any responsibility to you—legal, moral, or ethical.

There are a growing number of organizations which find NIB's behavior outrageously biased. The response to our open letter proves that. And interestingly enough (although not surprising under the circumstances), we have had not one single letter or phone call commenting favorably upon NIB's activities. I conclude my remarks with an excerpt from an eloquent letter we received from the Executive Director of a small not-for-profit organization. I will not identify him for fear it might bring NIB retaliation on his group:

"... it is my conclusion," he says, "that the NIB constitutes a malign force in the charitable world. It prevents rather than encourages the emergence of charitable groups that depend on small contributions by less-well-off individ-

uals. It stifles advocacy groups, either by refusing to rate them or by subjecting them to more stringent standards than appear to be applied in the case of other groups.

"... unless charity is something to be

run only by and for the rich, it seems to me important that the NIB revise its standards so as to permit the emergence of constituencies that will serve (and be supported by) persons who are not wealthy."

If you or a friend would like to remember the National Federation of the Blind in your will, you can do so by employing the following language:

"I give, devise, and bequeath unto National Federation of the Blind, a

District of Columbia non-profit corporation, the sum of \$_____ (or "_____ percent of my net estate" or "The following stocks and bonds: _____") to be used for its worthy purposes on behalf of blind persons."

BLINDNESS: THE CIRCLE OF SOPHISTRY

An Address Delivered By

KENNETH JERNIGAN

President, National Federation of the Blind
At the Banquet of the Annual Convention

Phoenix, Arizona, July 6, 1984

Sophistry, we are told, is an argument or proposition which is clever and plausible but false and misleading. To illustrate let us consider color. We learn from the dictionary that color is: "The property of reflecting light of a particular wavelength." In other words if an object is green, the color (or wavelength) green is reflected back, and all other colors (or wavelengths) are absorbed. White, as everyone knows, is the absence of color, and black is the opposite. Yet, what we call black reflects no light waves at all and is, thus, the absence of color—while what we call white (again to quote the dictionary) is: "The reflection of all the rays that produce color." Therefore, the logic is inevitable: black is white, and white is black.

I wish I could say that the linguistic sleight-of-hand which I have just performed is symbolic of nothing more vicious than verbal gymnastics or a pleasant game, but that is not the way of it. Sophistry is no toy. It is one of the most deadly weapons in the arsenal of tyranny. It has bedeviled and bedazzled humanity since the beginning

of history. If (as the saying goes) hypocrisy is the tribute which vice pays to virtue, then sophistry is the tribute which lies pay to the truth.

Sophistry takes its name from the sophists of ancient Athens. It was the principal instrument which they used first to discredit, then to imprison, and finally to execute Socrates. It was big in the middle ages with the Inquisition and the burning of witches. It flourishes today in the twentieth century. All we need do to understand the power of clever and plausible but false and misleading words is to remember the twisted rhetoric of Joseph Goebels and Adolph Hitler. Except for the glitter and hypnotic lure of sophistry the Nazi tanks might never have rolled, and the death and destruction of the Second World War might never have been.

And what sophistry has done to society as a whole it has done to the component parts—especially and particularly to disadvantaged minorities. And of all the minorities, none has experienced more cruelly and bitterly the blight of sophistry than those of us who are blind. It has been our greatest

stumbling block, our heaviest burden. It remains so today.

The clever and plausible but false and misleading arguments (the propositions which put us down and keep us out) are temptingly easy to accept and believe. With respect to the blind the message is clear and uncomplicated: the blind lack eyesight. Other people have it. Sight is important. Therefore, the blind are inferior. We are unable to compete. We must be taken care of. We cannot hold jobs—not, that is, unless the work is very simple, very repetitive, and very subsidized. We cannot raise children, travel independently, or manage our own lives. When one of us makes an achievement of obvious excellence, we are told that it means we have special genius, special talents, or unusual powers. Our other senses have grown keener to compensate. We are marvels, freaks, conversation pieces, and objects of pity—and often all at the same time and by the same person. According to this line of thought, whatever you call it and however you cut it, we are not (and can never hope to be) everyday, normal people—laughing, crying, working, playing, succeeding, failing, hoping, and dreaming like those around us. We are blind. That is sufficient. It is a matter of simple logic and common sense.

This is the traditional norm, the time-honored belief; and if it is true, we should face it, not fight or deny it. And we should face it not angrily or bitterly but with acceptance and humility, with gratitude for the charity we receive and the sufferance we are given. Moreover, if (as we are repeatedly told) this is really how it is, we should disband the National Federation of the Blind and confront our troubles alone—

drawing whatever comfort we can from doctor, social worker, or priest; for there will be little purpose in collective action. If our problems are inherent in our blindness (if they are truly innate and not externally imposed), then our whole organizational existence has been not only a tragic mistake but a cruel detriment, for we have kindled hopes which can never be realized and conjured dreams which can never come true.

But, of course, this is not the way it is; and no sophistry on earth can make it that way. The arguments and propositions which hold that we are inferior are clever and plausible, but they are false and misleading. To put it bluntly, they are just plain lies. The fact is that the average blind person can compete on terms of equality with the average sighted person—in whatever line of endeavor you care to mention: work, play, criminal conduct, saintliness, immorality, rectitude, ill-temper, gentle behavior, laziness, or creativity. Then, why (one reasonably may ask) do seventy percent of the blind of employable years not have jobs? And even when we do get jobs, why are so many of us relegated to the sheltered shops and paid less than the minimum wage? Why (if what I am saying is the truth) are we told where we can sit on airplanes, denied insurance on equal terms with others, custodialized in the home by our families, condescended to on the streets by strangers, and treated in general as if we were children or freaks?

The answer is easy to give but hard (at least at the emotional level) for the average person to accept. In primitive societies light (whether firelight or daylight) meant safety and survival.

Darkness meant danger and fear. Light and the ability to see were equated, and they were thought of as good and pure. Blindness was considered synonymous with darkness, and darkness meant evil and inferiority.

The blind were not good at hunting or dodging a spear, so they were regarded as a drag on the tribe, a burden and a hindrance. They were treated and thought of as second-class, and they doubtless accepted the public view of their limitations, with a great many feelings of guilt and shame thrown in for good measure.

We no longer live in the hunting culture of primitive times, but we often act as if we do. The myths and prejudices of those times still dominate our feelings and control our subconscious. In today's society there is very little premium on killing a saber-tooth tiger or dodging a spear, but when you dig beneath the surface and get to where we live, our attitudes indicate otherwise. The cave-man culture is gone, but the cave-man values remain. At the core of our being we fear the dark; we shiver at the roar of the saber-tooth tiger; and we feel that the blind are a burden to the tribe.

How (in the face of irrefutable evidence to the contrary) are all of these myths maintained? How (with blind persons successfully doing every conceivable kind of job, having families and raising children as effectively as anybody else, and participating fully in the political and social life of the community) can the false assumptions and second-class treatment survive? The answer can be given in a single word—sophistry. It is not, for the most part, that the average citizen on the street

wants to do us harm or deprive us of opportunity. It is not (except when their jobs or their vested interests or their egos are involved) that the employees of the governmental and private agencies doing work with the blind wish us ill. Certainly it is not that we ourselves seek to sell ourselves short and limit our horizons. Yet, the myths about blindness remain, bolstered and reinforced by clever and plausible but false and misleading arguments and propositions.

The mistaken beliefs and false concepts are almost universally accepted by the general public, and when people lose their eyesight, they carry with them into blindness the erroneous ideas which they held when they were sighted. They then live the part they are expected to play and feed back to society the misconceptions which it gave them in the first place. Likewise, those who are born blind are taught their roles from the beginning, and unless they are given counterbalancing information, they live as they are expected to live. They think as they are expected to think.

To make matters worse the employees (whether blind or sighted) of the governmental and private agencies established to give service to the blind are also (with notable exceptions) part of the negative process. The urge to feel important is very nearly irresistible. Therefore, when these "experts" tell the blind that they must adjust to a very limited existence and when they tell the sighted that their work is so difficult and complex as to approach the mysterious, they are generally believed. This is so even though what they are dispensing is not "professional" knowledge or the results of research or new truth

but simply old ideas and the fear of the dark, which they absorbed as children. Thus, the circle is complete, with each component giving feedback and reinforcement to the rest of the loop.

Yet, despite the sophistry and the widespread belief that we are inferior, we have made gains. In fact, during the past four decades there has been such an upsurge of progress and achievement as to constitute a veritable revolution. The new element (the root cause) is represented by those of us here tonight. You know what it is as well as I do. It is the National Federation of the Blind.

When Dr. Jacobus tenBroek and the rest of that handful of founders met in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, in 1940 to organize our movement, they understood what they were doing and what it would mean. The Federation was to be the vehicle for concerted action by the blind. It was to be the circuit breaker to stop the flow of clever and plausible but false and misleading ideas which went in a seemingly endless circle from the sighted public to the agencies serving the blind to the blind themselves and back again.

That is what the National Federation of the Blind was created to do, and that is what it has done. We have done it in the past; we are doing it now; and we intend to keep on doing it in the future—regardless of who dislikes it or how much they resent it. Established patterns are comfortable. They require no mental effort, and they give money and power and prestige to various groups and individuals. But we are simply no longer willing to be second-class citizens. We want no strife or confrontation, but we will do what we have to do; and we are absolutely determined to

break the circle of destructive sophistry which blights our lives and limits our opportunities. We know who we are, and we will never go back.

One of our problems is the tendency of the general public to try (regardless of the truth of the matter) to make us conform to their notions of what we are. When the facts are at variance with their preconceptions, they tend to forget the facts and remember it and tell it as they thought it was in the first place. No one is worse at this "don't bother me with the facts; I know how it is" attitude than the members of the media.

The July 24, 1981, edition of the News Tribune of Tacoma, Washington, carried a feature article about Glen Latham. Glen, who is totally blind and a staunch Federationist, is a Vietnam veteran. He is also a home owner in Tacoma. The newspaper reporter (a Ms. Willene Anderson) said that she wanted to write an article to help remove the stereotypes and misconceptions about the blind. She came to Glen's house and talked with him at length. You can determine from the letter which Glen wrote to Ms. Anderson's boss whether she told it like it was or simply liked it the way she told it:

The purpose of my letter, Glen wrote, is two-fold. The first is concerned with me personally. The second is concerned with the blind in general and the stereotyped view that Ms. Anderson's article encourages.

Ms. Anderson has me quoted as saying, "Our sight is one of many things we take for granted. When it is gone, we must

start our lives all over again, just as children learning—only this time in the dark." I do not recall making such a statement. Children learn to walk and talk. They do not have to be taught to see. I did not have to learn to walk or talk again.

I recall mentioning to Ms. Anderson that my mother had died. Ms. Anderson made no inquiries as to when my mother died or if I lived with her. I made no statement which could even possibly have implied that I lived with my mother after my return from the war. When I came back from Vietnam in February of 1968, I spent six months in Balboa Naval Hospital in San Diego, six months in rehabilitation in Palo Alto, then six months back in the hospital for further operations. My mother died a month before my release from the hospital. Had Ms. Anderson asked, she would have known this.

Ms. Anderson leads her readers to believe that after I recovered from my wounds, I went to live with my mother. Then she died, leaving me all alone to pick up the pieces of my life once again. Stating that I lived with my mother is a complete falsehood.

Ms. Anderson has me quoted as saying, "It used to be so important to me, the outdoors—things I could see. I had always dreamed of living in this area." This is false. During the interview, Ms. Anderson said, and I quote, "Glen, you are very athletic. What do you think about the handicapped climbers of Mt. Rainier?" Ms. Anderson assumed that I am athletic; I am not. I made no mention of liking the outdoors or of being athletically inclined. I did not tell her that I had "always dreamed of living in this area." I stated that I had always

liked living in this area. There is a big difference between "liking" and "dreaming."

When I was looking for a home to purchase, Ms. Anderson implies that I had to take into account numerous special considerations. She states that "many homebuyers are looking for things that are aesthetically pleasing." This implies that I was not. Why wouldn't I want a home that is aesthetically pleasing? Of course it was an important factor!

Ms. Anderson states that the house doesn't have any "extra barriers, like steep stairs or sharp corners." Whose house did she look at? From the street it is obvious that the house has a second floor. She made no inquiries concerning the architectural design of the place. But how could she have missed the upstairs, even if she missed the basement? There are, in fact, two flights of what are considered "steep" stairs in my home. One flight leads to the second floor, and the other leads to the basement, where I spend most of my time working at my desk. My home could not be considered small. I have 2,400 square feet of living space. The previous owners of the house were not visually impaired or physically disabled in any way, and the house remains structurally and architecturally the same as it was when I bought it.

Ms. Anderson also states that I "get help in mowing my lawn and other outside work." She made no inquiries concerning yard work. The fact of the matter is that I have hired a professional lawn service. The lawn service I use serves over 90 homes in the Tacoma area, and very few of these homes are occupied by the disabled or the elderly. The hiring

of the lawn service does not mean that I cannot do the work myself. Why do the other homeowners have the same service?

Ms. Anderson states that my relatives help me. My cousin and her son live with me. I am helping her go to college. We have a living arrangement that is helpful to both of us. She has lived with me for the past year. Prior to that she lived in California, and for almost five years I lived alone. I was not, and am still not, dependent on my relatives.

Ms. Anderson states that my furnishings are simple. I think this is a commentary on her taste and not my furniture. She states that "furniture in the middle of the room would be bothersome." Bothersome to whom? Perhaps she didn't see the coffee table that stands in front of the ten foot sofa that she was sitting on during the interview. Perhaps she didn't see the large ottoman which sits in front of the large round swivel chair that I was sitting in.

Ms. Anderson made no inquiries as to who does the grocery shopping. Yet, she says in her article that I rely on my relatives to do it. Sometimes I shop with them; sometimes I don't. My cousin and I usually shop for groceries once a month as a matter of convenience because of our busy schedules. We buy large quantities, requiring the use of a car—which, I may add, I own.

Ms. Anderson also stated that "housecleaning chores are mostly done by relatives." How does she know this? She certainly didn't ask. If she had, she would have found that we all share equally in the housework. Everyone keeps their own room clean, including my cousin's seven-year-old son. We all share in keeping the rest of the house clean. She has me quoted as saying that

I can cook, iron clothes, and do household chores. However, she turns right around and states that "housecleaning chores are mostly done by relatives."

I am sure Ms. Anderson felt she was doing a great service to me and the blind community. I also realize that for a newspaper to attract its readers, it must have "good copy," and that in many cases a story must be dramatized to emphasize a point. However, this article is so distorted and false that I feel it has done more damage than good. The attitudes she expresses are more sophisticated than the stereotyped sob story of the blind man selling pencils on the street corner, but the fundamentals are the same.

This is Glen Latham's letter, and it sums up an entire system—the clever and plausible but false and misleading ideas and beliefs which have blocked our progress and blighted our lives through the centuries. The reporter's intentions were doubtless good and her motives the best, but the damage is no less severe and the hurt no easier to bear—not to mention which a lot of us are getting tired of having our road to hell paved with other people's good intentions. More often than not, such people act shocked if we try to set them straight and feel angry if we are not grateful for the efforts they have made. Our conduct is at variance with the humility they expect us to demonstrate. We do not wish to be arrogant or truculent, but we are not prepared to sit passively by and be pictured as what we are not. Let people think what they will and call us what they please. We are simply no

longer willing to be second-class citizens. We have learned the truth about ourselves and our blindness, and (regardless of the consequences) we intend to live that truth. We know who we are, and we will never go back.

If the Glen Latham story were an isolated instance, it would be regrettable but not worth making much noise about. However, it is not isolated but typical. The Jaycees of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, encouraged the blind of the area to become members. With no further details one would applaud the action. However, the Jaycees established a segregated chapter for the blind—and what do you suppose the chapter was named? It was called the Deadeye Chapter. If the name was meant to be funny, it is sick. If it was not, it is sicker. Karen Mayry and our other South Dakota members are fighting hard to combat such madness, and we are making progress; but the road stretches far ahead.

The United States Association for Blind Athletes is relatively noncontroversial, but in 1979 a seemingly innocent event concerning that organization occurred which demonstrates why the sophistries about blindness are so attractive to the members of the sighted public. Jeff Hopper is Vice President of Marketing and Administration for a savings and loan association in the Puget Sound area. He is also volunteer president of the Northwest Chapter of the United States Association for Blind Athletes. In a magazine column he wrote as follows:

The concept of winning has long been taught through athletic competition. It

is a priority in our society and most people who would be considered "successful" can relate to some form of athletic competition.

Until recently, however, blind and visually impaired persons in the United States have been excluded from athletic participation. More importantly, the lack of athletic participation for the visually handicapped has restricted their learning of the winning process.

I am sure that Mr. Hopper is both generous and sincere, and at first glance there would seem to be nothing wrong with his statement. But look again. Is it really necessary for the blind (or, for that matter, the sighted) to engage in athletics to learn the concept of winning or understand how to be successful? If it is, and if the blind never had the opportunity to participate in athletics before the establishment of the United States Association for Blind Athletes, then how very much more important and significant is Mr. Hopper's volunteer work than it would be if he were simply performing a run-of-the-mill civic or community project. Of course, the whole proposition is nothing but nonsense and sophistry. A great many of the most successful people the world has ever known have not had the slightest interest in athletics; and as we know from personal experience, there are (and always have been) plenty of ways for the blind to learn the concept of winning without engaging in athletics. This is not to take anything away from the United States Association for Blind Athletes or Mr. Hopper. It is only to point out one of the reasons why

sophistries about the blind are so attractive. They permit sighted people with feelings of inferiority to feel important.

Even though the actions of the newspaper reporter, the Jaycees, and Mr. Hopper do us harm, there may be some excuse for their behavior. They are not constantly dealing with blind people, and they do not have the opportunity on a daily basis to observe the problems created by the misconceptions and wrong ideas which they help to promote. For the most part they do not claim to be experts.

Unfortunately the same cannot be said for the employees of the governmental and private agencies established to give service to the blind. Their much vaunted "professionalism," their very rationale for being, rests upon the premise that they know what blindness is about and how to deal with it. In the manner of doctors dealing with medical matters, they hold themselves out as the possessors of correct information, and they say they can teach that information not only to the public but also to those of us who are blind.

Yet, much of the literature which comes from these agencies is worse than what we get from the public. As an example, I call your attention to a book published by the American Foundation for the Blind in 1974 and reissued in 1978. It was written by a person with impressive credentials named Anne Yeadon, and it is entitled Toward Independence—The Use of Instructional Objectives In Teaching Daily Living Skills to the Blind. If there was ever a case of destructive sophistry and just plain drivel, this book is it. If what it teaches represents all we can expect in

the way of independence, who can wonder at the fear people have about blindness and the low esteem in which we are so often held!

This treatise on "independence" has sections on: table behavior, domestic tasks, kitchen equipment, and cooking. Let us look at the section on table behavior. It contains these subparts:

- Seating Self at a Table
- The Locating Technique
- An Informal Place Setting
- Exploring Contents of a Plate of Food
- Use of a Knife and Fork to Cut Food
- Placing Knife on Plate When Not in Use
- Checking for Food Dropped from Plate
- Placing of Knife and Fork at Close of Meal
- Differentiating Pepper and Salt
- Applying Pepper and Salt
- Pouring Cold Liquids
- Adding Sugar to a Drink
- Use of the Spoon for Stirring
- Obtaining Food From a Relish Dish
- Boning a Fish
- Serving Self at the Table
- Pouring of Hot Liquids
- Carrying Containers of Food/Liquid
- Drinking Soup With the Aid of a Spoon
- "Scooping" Food With the Aid of a Fork
- The "Buffer" Technique
- Buttering a Piece of Bread
- Cutting Salad With a Knife and Fork
- Use of a fork to eat desserts
- Handling and Eating Dry Foods
- Cutting Fried Eggs With the Aid of a Knife and Fork
- Cutting a Piece of Pie/Cake
- Lighting a Cigarette
- Using an Ash Tray

I think we can get the tone of the book by examining two of these items.

First, let us see what it says about "Placing Knife on Plate When Not in Use":

TITLE: Demonstrating the placing of the knife on the plate.

OBJECTIVE: During the course of a meal the student will demonstrate the ability to place the knife on the top right hand side of the plate. This will be done in accordance with the following criteria:

1. with the handle of the knife overlapping the edge of the plate,
2. without the knife being pushed over or into the plate,
3. ensuring ease in relocating knife by using same position each time.

TECHNIQUE (Manual Dexterity): The student, during the course of a meal, may decide he does not need the use of the knife. In order to relocate the knife easily, it is suggested that it be placed in the same position on the plate each time, e.g. across the top right-hand corner of the plate, between a 12 o'clock and 3 o'clock position. I might inject here that most of the plates I deal with do not have corners—but back to the text.

In order to achieve the above, the student will bring his right hand to the right side edge of the plate—but will not allow the knife to touch the table. The thumb will locate an approximate 3 o'clock position. The handle of the knife will be placed in this position, with the tip of the handle slightly overlapping the edge of the plate—this allows the student to relocate the knife by running his fingers along the outer edge of the plate and not placing his

hand into the plate.

Safety Awareness: The student will attempt to retain a mental picture of the position of the knife, as the fork, when being used, may inadvertently push the knife from the plate.

That is what it says, and for the life of me I cannot understand the comment about safety. Moreover, one gets the distinct impression that the author is speaking to a child, programming a robot, or talking to a person who has never had contact with civilization. When an individual becomes blind, that individual does not automatically lose all of the knowledge and abilities that he or she ever possessed; nor does the person become retarded.

But back to the book. What is said about the knife is no worse than what is said about the spoon:

TITLE: Demonstrating the use of a spoon for stirring.

OBJECTIVE: When presented with a container of liquid and a spoon the student will demonstrate the ability to use the spoon to stir the liquid. This will be done in accordance with the following criteria:

1. by placing the spoon into the container without causing the container to overturn or overflow.
2. by introducing the "stirring motion" without the liquid overflowing.
3. by replacing the spoon in its original position without disturbing other items.

TECHNIQUE (Manual Dexterity): The

student will hold the spoon in the same manner as a soup spoon, except that it will be held with the inner bowl facing the student's body and in a vertical position when placed in the container.

I interrupt to wonder how else except in a vertical position one could hold the spoon if the container has any depth and if it is in an upright position with its bottom on the table—but back to the learned text.

If the container has a handle the student will grasp it firmly. If the container does not have a handle the student will place the thumb of the free hand over the top, side edge and the remaining fingers will lie just below the thumb along the side of the bowl. The spoon will be brought to the container and the bowl of the spoon placed into the liquid.

Finger Manipulation and Safety Awareness: The spoon will be turned, usually in clockwise motion, around the circumference of the container, by a gentle circular motion of the wrist without scraping the sides or bottom of the container. The spoon will then be returned to its original position. If, however, the liquid is thick, the handle of the spoon should be lightly tapped on the side of the container—to remove excess—before returning to its original position.

NOTE: The instructor will hold her hand over the student's and vice versa, and demonstrate the smoothness of the task. A student low on concepts will probably require extensive practice to achieve successful results.

—and also beset by a number of questions. What if the she is a he? What if I don't want to move the spoon in a clock-wise direction? What if I don't want to grasp the handle of the container or drape my fingers over the top side edge? It is enough to drive one to drink—after, of course, the spoon has been removed as a matter of safety.

Remember that there is an entire book full of this idiocy and that this is not an isolated but a typical example of what we are getting from the agencies. Is it any wonder that the public is reinforced in its misconceptions and that the blind (especially blind children who grow up in the system or newly blind persons who fall into its clutches) come to doubt their worth and belittle their abilities!

With this sort of madness coming not just from the public but also from the agencies it is no wonder that blind persons (especially those not having the perspective which is gained by the information, the shared experiences, and the reinforcement which come from membership in the National Federation of the Blind) often develop offbeat and unrealistic devices for trying to gain prestige and for not appearing to be like other blind people. There is the Uncle Remus technique of pretending to be crafty and possessed of special powers, which is typified by a quote attributed to a blind man who was formerly in the Maryland legislature. In the article concerning his death in the July 31, 1979, Baltimore Sun this passage appears: "As a legislator, he maintained that his blindness was an aid as well as a handicap. He once told a reporter that he developed an increased sense of hearing because of his loss of

I find myself very nearly overwhelmed

sight, which he said allowed him to pick up word of political deals being made far down a hall or across a committee room."

Of course, we know that such claims are utter nonsense, playing on the credibility of the public and reinforcing and feeding back to the sighted their own superstitions. Or perhaps the man didn't say it at all. Maybe it was simply made up by the reporter as a good line and a plausible story. Whichever way it happened, this sort of thing does not achieve the objective of making the blind seem more capable. It harms us and increases the general notion of our abnormality.

Then, there is another technique. In the May 10, 1984, Washington Post there is an article headlined "Blind Student Seizes Challenges." The article details the accomplishments of a blind student—president of the student body, floor president of his dormitory, administrative assistant to the College Democrats, and a lot more of the same. In the midst of it all, this passage occurs: "Schroeder lives in a house off campus with three other students. He usually walks the 20 minutes from home to campus alone. No dog, no cane, no guide.

"Using any of these aids would mean 'admitting that he is blind,' said Andrew Sherman, a good friend. 'And he doesn't envision himself as a blind person. He sees himself as a person who is blind.'"

This is not independence. It is pathetic self-deception. Again, it does not elevate the image or improve the standing of the blind—not even of the student in question. The very article we are discussing proves the point by

talking about how the student gets lost and spends hours trying to find his way home, and how he is very proud of not having to ask for help.

So the circle is complete—the misconceptions of the public, the acceptance and strengthening of those misconceptions by the agencies, the passthrough to the blind, and the feedback once more to the public: each component reinforcing the myths and false beliefs of the other and each using the other as authority. In such circumstances is it any wonder that I recently received a letter from an inventor who said that he had constructed a special toilet paper holder for the blind and that he would like us to help him market it? Is it any wonder that another inventor thinks the blind cannot clean themselves at all and should only use toilet paper for drying after being washed by the special spray he has constructed? In his letter of October 25, 1983, the inventor says: "The blind will really appreciate the use of the Hygeia cleaning because the designed spray cleans quickly and thorough. Drying is complete by only using a few sheets of tissue or a small cloth."

Is it any wonder that a man wrote to me a few months ago saying that he would rather be dead than blind! In his own words: "I have just been told I have the narrow type glaucoma that might lead to an emergency. I'm scared. Please send any prevention data. Couldn't live without eyesight. Wouldn't want to."

So what does it mean—all of this analyzing of the circle of sophistry about blindness, all of this talk about where we are and where we have been? What is our present situation, and what lies ahead? In the first place let us

recognize that, with all of our problems, we have it better today than we have ever had it before in all of our history. In ancient times we were exposed to die on the hillsides as babies. In the middle ages we were dressed in donkey ears and forced to fight each other at country fairs for public sport. In the early years of the present century we were treated with more apparent kindness, but as we know, appearances are not always what they seem. We were no longer put out to die on the hillsides or forced to fight each other for the entertainment of our neighbors, but the substance of public attitudes remained the same. There were no jobs, no opportunities, and no hope.

I know from personal experience (and so do many of the rest of you) the pain and despair of continued isolation and nothing to do. Some of us broke free. The rest remained captive—some for a lifetime, and some still existing. There comes a time when the spirit dies and the body lives on. It is a close question as to whether it is better to die as a child or continue to exist year after year in the living death which many of the blind have endured. Yes, I know the implications of the question; and no, I am not exaggerating. I mean exactly and literally what I say.

But, of course, our answer to the question is simple: we are no longer willing to accept either one of these alternatives. We have learned to be free, and we intend to keep it that way.

We have eaten at the table of liberty, and we will never again settle for the crumbs on the floor.

As our movement continues to strengthen, the circle of sophistry weakens. There is much good will toward the blind, and while it is true that some people resent our progress, most do not. As they learn who we are and what we are, the majority join with us. With the work of the Federation in South Dakota the Deadeye Chapter of the Jaycees lasted for less than a year. Our television and radio announcements blanket the airwaves, and we have had major network coverage in recent months. We confront the airlines when they try to make us take segregated seating. We find new jobs in expanded areas of employment. Above all, an increasing number of us are living our Federationism on a daily basis, knowing it to be our passport to freedom.

In the days ahead our task will not be easy. We know it, and we are prepared. Whatever the sacrifice, we will make it. Whatever the price, we will pay it. We must finish our march to acceptance and full membership in society. Our heritage requires it; our purpose proclaims it; our humanity demands it. This cause of ours is a sacred trust. It is worthy of all that we have or can ever hope to be—and we shall not fail. My brothers and my sisters, the future is ours. Come! Join me in the battle, and we will make it all come true!

A LETTER FROM CLOVERNOOK AND SOME COMMENTS ABOUT PUBLISHERS OF BRAILLE

by Kenneth Jernigan

In the June, 1984, issue of the Monitor we carried an article entitled: "American Printing House for the Blind in Trouble Again." In that article we said: "Triformation in Florida is getting an increasing share (in fact, the largest share) of the Braille market. Talking book records are being made by Evatone and a variety of other groups. Computers are proliferating and offering new and exciting alternatives. In other words, the American Printing House for the Blind is still living in a bygone era—or, more properly speaking, it is in danger of ceasing to live."

Late in June we received from Mr. Mark Walpole, Assistant Workshop Director of the Clovernook Home and School for the Blind, the following letter:

North College Hill, Ohio
June 14, 1984

Dear Sir:

In an article about THE AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE FOR THE BLIND, in the June 1984 Braille Monitor, Triformation Braille Services is identified as having "the largest share of the Braille market."

This is not true. American Printing House produces more master pages annually than Triformation, and Triformation's output of finished pages is dwarfed by Clovernook's 63,000,000 pages per year.

This piece of misinformation is recognizable from a recent Triformation newsletter. It's a simple case of "you can't believe everything you read." I'm concerned that you've passed it along, at face value, giving the impression that Triformation Braille Services is the only, and largest, alternative in the Braille business. It isn't.

Sincerely,
Mark Walpole
Assistant Workshop Director

As past issues of the Monitor will prove, we never hesitate to retract an error, and we do it ungrudgingly. Furthermore, we do not bury our retractions in some out-of-the-way corner of an inside page. In the present instance, however, a comparison of what we said and what Mr. Walpole says we said would indicate that a retraction is not in order. There are also good reasons why Mr. Walpole's letter, with all that it implies, cannot be allowed (purely and simply in the interest of truth) to stand alone without comment.

It is a fact that Triformation is the fastest growing Braille producer in this country. Therefore, our sentence (read properly) is true: "Triformation in Florida is getting an increasing share (in fact, the largest share) of the Braille market." Of course, the opera-

tive words are "is getting."

Be that as it may, we are not trying to quibble. We believe that the American Printing House for the Blind (if you take into account pages of textbook Braille produced with the federal appropriation) produces more master pages—that is, pages from which copies are made—than Triformation. As to Clovernook, we believe it produces fewer master pages than Triformation, but since it now produces a number of magazines, it turns out more total Braille pages at the present time than Triformation. Triformation says (and we believe them) that they produce more master pages than anybody else in the country today with the possible exception of the American Printing House and that they produce more pages of literary (as opposed to textbook) Braille.

To complete the picture certain other things must be said: We believe that Clovernook shamefully exploits its blind employees, paying them less than the minimum wage and custodializing them in the most miserable way imaginable. This is why we left Clovernook. It did not seem morally supportable for us to condemn the payment of subminimum wages and to do it in a magazine which was being Brailled by blind persons being paid those very subminimum wages. We believe that Clovernook's exploitation of blind workers allows it to underbid a number of other producers and that this is why it still produces a sizable number of magazines.

When we left Clovernook, we asked the American Printing House for the Blind

(at a somewhat higher price) to Braille the Monitor. However, the Printing House (especially in recent years) has also exploited its blind employees. If our understanding is correct, the Printing House pays blind employees the minimum wage, but that is about all. There is no advancement; there are relatively few blind employees; and there is a dearth of blind persons at the managerial level.

We left the Printing House and took our business to Triformation. Why? We did it because Triformation's prices were competitive and because we found no evidence of exploitation of blind workers. Triformation has a high ratio of blind to sighted employees, and those employees are not just on the bottom rung of the ladder. They are at every level of the business—from top management to the newest recruit. The lowest salaries are well above the minimum wage. Triformation is prompt and courteous in their service, and they do not get government appropriations.

Yes, there are alternatives in the Braille producing business, and the alternative we like best among the American Printing House, Clovernook, and Triformation, is Triformation. We make a prediction. Twelve months from now Clovernook will be producing less Braille, and Triformation will be producing more. Clovernook will lose an increasing number of its magazines, and both it and the American Printing House must do some re-thinking or face bleak times.

GRANT MACK RUNS A STOP LIGHT AND GETS CAUGHT BY THE AUDIBLE TRAFFIC SIGNAL

by Kenneth Jernigan

I don't remember how old I was when I
first heard the little poem:

Ah, what a tangled web we weave
When first we practice to deceive.

Recently at a meeting of the North American delegation of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind held here at the National Center, Grant Mack (President of the American Council of the Blind) waxed eloquent about how tired he was getting of our constantly saying that the National Federation of the Blind speaks for all of the blind. In the sense that we make this statement it is, of course, true. Mr. Mack knows this if he is perceptive, but each to his own.

At any rate Mr. Mack made a great point that every organization should speak only for its own members and nobody else. He sounded quite angry and quite self-righteous about it all. I don't know how others at the meeting felt, but I was most unimpressed. His tirade was not only distracting but also in poor taste.

Be that as it may, correspondence has recently reached me which puts Mr. Mack's comments in a new light. It makes of the whole thing sort of what you might call a real knee-slapper:

June 8, 1984

Dear Mr. Jernigan:

The City of Cedar Rapids has in the past few months reviewed the concept of audible traffic signals for the blind and visually impaired. Our research has provided contact with a number of users and various associations. Locally we have discussed with Delores Reisinger, President of the Cedar Rapids Chapter of the National Federation, the Federation's concerns and basic position on the use of audible traffic signals. We are also in receipt of a copy of Resolution 82-19 adopted by the National Federation of the Blind on July 9, 1982. This Resolution quite clearly states the views of the National Federation. In correspondence dated June 4 from Grant Mack, President of the American Council of the Blind, it is stated that the initial views of the National Federation have perhaps changed on the use of audible traffic signals. I am taking the liberty of attaching a copy of that correspondence and trust that your considerations will enable an early reply to the undersigned which will permit us to consider the matter further before our City Council.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation in this regard. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,
M.B. Meyer

Cedar Rapids, Iowa

City Traffic Engineer
Traffic Engineering Department
City of Cedar Rapids

Salt Lake City, Utah
June 4, 1984

Dear Mr. Meyer:

Mr. Edward R. Murphy of Cedar Rapids has asked me to forward to you any information we have with respect to audible pedestrian devices which have been operating in downtown Salt Lake City for the past five years. As a result of that request, I am enclosing a copy of an article printed in the March, 1983, issue of the BRAILLE FORUM, a monthly publication of the American Council of the Blind. This article will give you a brief overview of our experiences here and includes the name of the Salt Lake City traffic engineer who prepared the study and who would be willing, I am sure, to answer any further questions you might have.

The only objection to these devices surfaced very early and came from only one source, the National Federation of the Blind. Their early objections have faded into oblivion and many of their most rabid opposers are now regular users of the audible signals and indicated that they were misled by the specious argument that audible signals were detrimental to blind people. As a daily user of these devices, I can personally attest that negotiating our wide, busy downtown intersections is much more comfortable and safer. I might also add that my capacity to negotiate intersections devoid of audible signals has not diminished. I travel widely throughout

the United States alone and can attest that the audible signals have not become a crutch. I urge you to keep your mind open about the use of these devices in your city and suggest that your blind citizens have a right to traverse your downtown areas as comfortably and as safely as possible.

If I can be of any further service in helping you with your decision, please let me know. I will be most happy to attend any public hearing or provide testimony either in person or by written form.

Sincerely,
Grant Mack, President
American Council of the Blind

Baltimore, Maryland
June 19, 1984

Dear Mr. Meyer:

I have your letter of June 8, 1984, concerning audible traffic signals for the blind; and I can assure you that the National Federation of the Blind has not changed its position on this matter. In fact, we are now more convinced than ever that the audible traffic signals constitute a hazard instead of a help.

Mr. Mack is mistaken when he says that we are the only group which opposes these devices. However, even if this were so, our opposition to them would represent the opinion of the majority of the active blind of the country. We are the largest organization of blind people in the nation, having some 50,000 members. The organization which Mr. Mack represents is (even though quite vocal) comparatively small. Mr. Mack ordinar-

ily, to the best of my knowledge, does not attempt to speak for our organization. His misinterpretation of our attitudes concerning audible traffic signals is a good example of why he should continue to adhere to this policy.

Along with this letter, I am sending you three articles which appeared in the December, 1983, edition of our magazine, the Braille Monitor. Published monthly, this magazine (which is available in

Braille, on recorded disc, and in print) receives wide circulation throughout the country. It is the most influential publication in the field. I urge you in the strongest possible terms not to install audible traffic signals. They are costly; they are useless; they are harmful.

Very truly yours,
Kenneth Jernigan, President
National Federation of the Blind

DOTTIE NEELY SPEAKS TO A SMALL UNKNOWN FRIEND

Dottie Neely (see May Monitor for 1984) has experienced abusive and discriminatory treatment during the past few months. This has not made her bitter or warped her perspective. She continues to be a living example of integrity and caring for others. The blind of the state of Missouri are fortunate to have her services as one of the employees of the state agency:

Sikeston, Missouri
July 1, 1983

Dear Small Unknown Friend:

A few days ago you spoke to me as I was walking past your house on my way home. Our conversation was at best brief, but the incident that occurred at its close meant more than your small self could ever imagine.

I write this letter to you now to say "thank you" for being your small self,

for recognizing me as a blind person (for that is what I am) and for having the courage to talk to me.

Another purpose for writing, too, is so that as years pass you may, from time to time, pick up this letter and remember your blind friend and the lesson that came from our experience.

Our contact was brief, yet I know much about you. I know that you are small, sensitive, polite, and eager. I know that you are anxious to please your older sister but were hurt and embarrassed when she slapped you in the face for calling me a blind person.

Hopefully within your lifetime you will be eager to express your sensitive feelings to others around you and join with others like myself who happen to be blind to change the general concept most people in our city of Sikeston hold about being blind.

Your slap in the face was a punishment for doing what your sister perceived to be wrong. When I heard your cry and

turned to ask about what might have caused you to cry, I hope that you would remember my reply. It is okay to be blind my small friend. It is okay to call people blind if you see them use a white cane like mine. It is okay to talk about your experiences with blind people to your many friends for after you do, it will indeed change their feeling about what it means to be blind.

I pray that your mother was sensitive about punishing both you and your sister. Her attitude, too, must be seasoned to accept blindness as a mere characteristic. Perhaps in time nobody will need to talk about blindness, it will be accepted in every way of life and in every occupation.

Well, small friend, you taught me a lesson, too. You taught me that small children have as much to say as grown folks. For this I also say THANKS!

Give your mom and sister a hug. Keep talking to me as I travel past your home. Next time I will let you shake hands with my tall skinny white friend, Matilda.

Sincerely,
Dottie Neely
Rehabilitation Teacher
Bureau for the Blind

Note: After this letter was sent, a telephone call was received from Wilson Pyron, Priest of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Sikeston, Missouri. The small unknown friend is now known. She is his three-year-old daughter, Stacy.

Sikeston, Missouri
July 26, 1984

Dear Dottie Neely:

Thank you so much for your "Open Letter to a Small, Unknown Friend." I am the father of your small three-year-old friend, Stacy Rebekah Pyron. I don't know that Stacy, in her three-year-old wisdom, really understands all that you shared with her, but I assure you that we will keep and treasure your letter to her and share it with her many times in the future. I know, also, that we will all grow into the full meaning of your words to Stacy, that it is o.k. to be blind.

I imagine that part of Stacy's three-year-old wisdom knows this, as indicated by the fact that she was so matter of fact when she spoke of your blindness. To her, your blindness is a mere characteristic and she was simply, and not insensitively, making a statement about this fact. When her older sister, Mary Tully, cupped her hand over Stacy's mouth, she in her own eight-year-old wisdom, was trying to protect your feelings as a person who might be sensitive about someone mentioning your blindness. She, too, was accepting your blindness as a characteristic that need not be mentioned any more than she might mention the fact that another person has blonde hair, or is tall or short, or is white, black, red, or yellow. From what I know of my girls, they were both acting on the basis of the sensitive maturity of their age, and that makes me very proud of them.

In my position as a priest in the Episcopal Church, I come into contact with many people who have problems. I can't know, with my own sense of sight, what you have experienced and suffered in your blindness, but I can guess that you have not come to your attitudes

about blindness, in general, and your own blindness, in specific, without much effort and struggle. But to be able to respond to a child's comment about your blindness with such sensitivity and such grace shows what courage you have and what gifts of God you have received. I could make the same statement, "It's o.k. to be blind my small friend," with no courage required at all and with no special gifts given to enable me to make the statement. For you to make that kind of statement reveals much to me of

your courage, the gifts you have received, and of which you have made good use.

God's continued peace and love to you, Dottie Neely, and thank you, thank you for giving my family insight into what it means to be blind, through your letter to my daughter.

Faithfully,
Wilson Nathaniel Pyron, Jr.
St. Paul's Episcopal Church

THE WILL TO ACT CAN MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

by Robert M. Eschbach

We are all familiar with the recent developments with GSA and their attempt to bring the fast food chains into federal locations, thus squeezing out the opportunities for blind persons to earn a living under the Randolph-Sheppard Act.

Letters have poured into the office of Secretary of Education Terrel Bell concerning a revision of the rules and regulations so that such actions will be avoided in the future.

An interesting experience took place in Youngstown, Ohio, which should be a lesson to all of us as Federationists. It's an example of what can really happen if: 1) we have the courage; and 2) if we are prepared to take action.

Tom Anderson, President of the NFB of Mahoning Valley in Ohio, became convinced that a massive letter-writing campaign would be helpful to the con-

cerns of blind vendors everywhere. He organized letter-writing parties and spread the word among friends and neighbors, and other members of the chapter did the same. The culmination came when he determined to take an unusual approach. He decided that the County Commissioners should be encouraged to send a letter to Secretary Bell.

Tom went to the Commission office and gave materials to the secretary regarding this whole issue. He asked to have an appointment with the Commissioners to discuss the matter—perhaps following one of their regular sessions. The secretary looked over the information and casually commented that it wouldn't be a bad idea to have some publicity about this issue.

Tom went home and waited. It wasn't long before he learned that he was on the agenda for the regular meeting of

the Commissioners. Until then, he hadn't considered publicity as a useful adjunct to this venture.

Two days before the presentation, Tom got busy and called the media. Newspaper, radio, and television were all alerted to what he wanted to do.

When Tom arrived for the meeting, he found that all the media were there! It was obvious that they had come because Tom had talked to them. The article from the Youngstown Vindicator makes this clear by its coverage of the Commissioner's meeting.

The significance of this experience is two-fold. Tom did what any of us could have done and probably didn't. He wanted people to know what was important to the Federation and included public officials in his approach. Folks are receptive because they know what Tom represents. His directness is not offensive because he means what he says. And he does not believe that what he has to say is a bother to important people with many other matters on their minds.

The media responded to Tom for one simple reason. He has worked tirelessly with them over the past few years and they all know who he is and what he represents. They know that what he wants to share is newsworthy. His ability to have major coverage for his presentation was a mark of longstanding preparation and familiarity with the news media.

So often we marvel at what public relations people can do and wish we could do the same. We can if we are willing to spend the time and energy to cultivate and work with those who disseminate the news.

What Tom Anderson and members of the Mahoning Valley Chapter did is not un-

usual or marvelous. It happened because they believe in what they are doing and they believe in doing it well.

Tom Anderson and the other members of the Mahoning Valley Chapter are among the most active Federationists in the nation. They work closely with the media on a continuing basis, and they do the same with the officials of local government. One example of how this pays off is the following proclamation, which was issued by the Mayor of Youngstown May 24, 1984:

CITY OF YOUNGSTOWN
PROCLAMATION

MAYOR PATRICK J. UNGARO

WHEREAS: The National Federation of the Blind is our Nation's largest consumer organization of blind persons with more than 50,000 members belonging to more than 500 chapters all over the country; and

WHEREAS: The National Federation of the Blind of the Mahoning Valley and the National Federation of the Blind of Youngstown are two official affiliates of the above said organization based in the City of Youngstown; and

WHEREAS: These two organizations have been working together to improve the living standards of all blind persons in our community for many years;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Patrick J. Ungaro, Mayor of the City of Youngstown, do hereby proclaim Sunday, May 27, 1984, as

"NATIONAL FEDERATION
OF THE BLIND DAY"

in the City of Youngstown, and do fur-

ther commend the Mahoning Valley and the Youngstown Chapters of the National Federation of the Blind for their efforts to make this a better community for both the blind and the sighted.

I hereunto set my hand and cause to be affixed the Great Seal of the City of Youngstown, this 24th day of May, 1984.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF

Patrick J. Ungaro, MAYOR

RECIPES

COTTLESTON PIE

by Peggy Pinder

Sioux City, Iowa

Preheat oven to 375 degrees
(Yield: 6 Servings)

Dear Dr. Jernigan:

When we last met, you pointed out to me a deficiency in my knowledge which I took seriously to heart. You brought to my attention that I was unable to tell you what a Cottleston Pie was. I immediately applied myself to remedying this situation as you will see from the enclosed recipe.

Sincerely,
Peggy Pinder

Cottleston, Cottleston, Cottleston Pie,
A fly can't bird, but a bird can fly.
Ask me a riddle and I reply:
"Cottleston, Cottleston, Cottleston
Pie."

Winnie-the-Pooh

Ingredients

1 9-inch pie shell baked until firm but
not browned
3/4 cup bite-size pieces of cooked ham
3 eggs
2 cups whipping cream
1/4 teaspoon salt
Grind pepper
Pinch nutmeg
1 1/2 Tablespoons butter cut in tiny
dots
1/2 cup grated cheese (optional)

Bake the pie shell in a preheated oven
at 425 degrees. To keep the pie shell
from sliding down the sides and puffing
up at the bottom, prick sides and bottom
well with the tines of a fork.

Line the bottom with a double thickness of cheesecloth and cover it with small clean stones, which you have gathered at the beach and washed, or with 1 inch of raw rice. Keep the rice and use it again and again.

Distribute the ham on the bottom of the baked pie shell.

Beat the eggs and cream with the

seasonings in a bowl until thoroughly mixed.

Pour on top of the ham.

Scatter the butter dots and cheese, if you use it, on top.

Set on rack in the middle of the oven and bake for 25-30 minutes until Cottleston pie has puffed up and browned.

Serve immediately while piping hot.

DERBY PIE

by Melanie Rudell

(Note: Melanie Rudell is the Treasurer of the National Federation of the Blind of Wyoming.)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees

Ingredients

1 cup chocolate chips

4 Tbsp. of margarine, melted

1 cup sugar

1/3 cup flour

1 cup walnuts chopped

2 eggs

1 9-inch pie shell (unbaked)

Mix butter, sugar, flour, and beat in eggs one at a time. Stir in nuts. Put chips in bottom of shell. Pour mix into pan over chips. Bake 40 to 50 minutes. Do not overbake.

MONITOR MINIATURES * * * * *****Books Available:**

We have been requested to carry the following announcement:

"Horizons for the Blind, 7001 N. Clark Street, Chicago, IL 60626, (312) 973-7600, offers for sale an exciting assortment of surprisingly inexpensive books which you will want to add to your personal collection.

"Included are a wide selection of cookbooks and craft instruction booklets, as well as books which give step by step instructions for growing a vegetable garden and choosing and caring for house plants. At present, most of these books are available only in Braille, but large print and cassette editions will be available soon. For your free Braille or large print copy of New Publications, which gives the price and a description of each book, contact us either by mail or phone. Don't wait! Order yours while supplies are plentiful."

****Strawberry Festival Parade:**

Dennis Ranker reports that the NFB of West Virginia prominently participated in the Strawberry Festival Parade in Buckhanon, West Virginia, June 2, 1984. Bob Hunt, former NFB of West Virginia President, hosted the out-of-town Federationists. As Dennis Ranker describes the Federation's participation in the parade:

"The NFB WV Cadillac, preceded by an honor guard with our state banner flanked by the American and West Virginia flags, made an impressive sight winding down the parade route.

"We heard lots of applause from spectators along the route and also had the

good fortune to transport A. James Manchin, West Virginia's popular secretary of state in our open top Eldorado convertible with Dick Porter and Sid Allen. The honor guard (Donna Munck, Joyce Turner, Dennis Ranker, and Mike Smith) walked the entire route."

****Aids Available:**

We have been asked to run the following announcement:

"B.I.T. (Boston Information & Technology Corporation), known across the country for the BIT Talkman personalized Cassette Recorder, announces that it has begun to offer direct sales to consumers. B.I.T. will carry a select line of innovative electronic products that are practical tools for visually impaired people. The catalog will carry their own products as well as other products chosen for their high quality and usefulness.

"Consumers (and organizations) will be able to purchase products by credit card by calling the national toll-free number (1-800-BIT-TALK) or by mailing their orders to BIT, P.O. Box 70, MIT Branch, Cambridge, MA 02139. Master Card, Visa, and American Express cards will be accepted. The first catalog is currently available in print, Braille, and cassette.

"New products include the Weight Talker Scale (\$95.00), Satoki Talking Watch (\$50.00), Panasonic Talking Clock Radio (\$155.00), Low Vision Blood Pressure Monitor (\$129.00), and Low Vision Personal Thermometer (\$19.00). Shipping and handling and Massachusetts State Tax additional.

"For more information, please contact Bill Prenovitz, Marketing Manager, at (617) 661-9555."

****Dies:**

Jimmy Nelson, a long-time leader of the National Federation of the Blind of Virginia, died in Richmond June 13, 1984. He is survived by his wife Gwen. Jimmy was a staunch Federationist. He was quiet and unassuming but absolutely unshakable in his principles. Shortly before the Virginia convention this spring, he learned that he had a serious liver disorder. It was this condition which caused his death.

****Elected:**

On May 19, 1984, Ed Beck (President of the National Federation of the Blind of Rhode Island) was elected Chairman of the state Legislative Committee of the American Association of Retired Persons; and on June 4, 1984, he was elected Vice Chairman of the Governor's Advisory Council for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Ed is universally respected throughout the legislative and executive branch of Rhode Island government. Quiet and unassuming, he is a most effective leader.

****Elected:**

The following people have been elected to office in the Chattanooga Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee: President, Hank LaBonne; First Vice President, Bill Baessler; Second Vice President, Phyllis West; Secretary, Debi Trovinger; and Treasurer, Judy Bryson. The following people were elected as Board Members: Lester Davenport, June Grant, Marcus Grant, and Corrie Perkins.

****Honored:**

Georgia Myers has been one of the long-time leaders of the Maryland affil-

iate. The May 10, 1984, Cumberland Evening Times carried the following article:

Resolution Presented—State Sen. John N. Bambacus (R-Allegany, Garrett) recently presented a Senate resolution to Georgia Myers of Cumberland. The resolution, passed by the membership of the Maryland Senate, was issued in recognition of Mrs. Myers' 10 years of service on the board of directors of Blind Industries and Services of Maryland. The parent of a blind daughter, Mrs. Myers maintains a continuing commitment to the improvement of programs and services for the handicapped.

****Visualtek for Sale:**

David Hyde, President of the NFB of Oregon, has asked us to run the following announcement:

For Sale Visualtek, voyager model. Excellent condition, price \$1,900. Contact Gwenneth VanFrank, 45 W. 29th Place, Eugene, Oregon 97402; or telephone (503) 683-0918.

****Dies:**

Ed Meskys of New Hampshire writes as follows:

"We report with great sadness the passing of Sen. Laurier "Loggy" Lamontagne of Berlin, New Hampshire. He has been a supporter of our affiliate since its founding over a quarter century ago and has introduced many bills and resolutions on our behalf. He has been at almost every state convention and has always done much to enliven our banquets. He recently developed vision problems and became legally blind, and became a full member of our affiliate. He passed away on Tuesday, May 22."

****Elected:**

The following officers were elected at the May 6th meeting of the NFB of Blackstone Valley, Massachusetts: Richard Wood, President; Paul Burkhardt, Vice President; Harold Tauson, Legislative Officer; Dianne Wood, Treasurer; Louis Mathieu, Secretary; and Sherrie Bicknell, Secretary Protem.

****On Flexible Disc:**

We have been asked to run the following announcement:

Access America newsletter on flexible disc—Access America is a free bimonthly newsletter published by the U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (ATBCB). This is the Federal agency which enforces the Architectural Barriers Act passed by Congress in 1968 to ensure access for physically handicapped persons to federally owned, leased, or funded buildings and facilities.

Braille Monitor readers interested in receiving Access America on a 33-1/3 RPM flexible disc should send a post card with their name and address to Access America, Washington, D.C. 20202, or call (202) 245-1591 (voice or TDD).

"The ATBCB, which sets the minimum guidelines and requirements for accessible design used in federally funded facilities, is conducting research of interest to NFB members. Projects on tactile surface treatments, signage, and telecommunication devices are underway and a technical paper on alarms was recently completed. Where appropriate, the agency will use information from its studies in developing guidelines and providing technical assistance."

****Elected:**

The following officers were recently elected in the Tidewater Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Virginia: President, Dawnelle Cruze; First Vice President, Bill Parker; Second Vice President, Grace Sawyer; Secretary, Debbie Butler; and Treasurer, Willard Nichols. Ella Herbert and Billy Wine were elected to serve as members of the Chapter Board. Martha Thompson was elected Chapter representative to the State Board, and Robert Southard alternate representative to the State Board.

****NAPUB:**

NAPUB (the National Association to Promote the Use of Braille), a division of the NFB, held elections at the NFB convention in Phoenix. The officers are: President, Betty Niceley of Kentucky; First Vice President, Dr. Emerson Foulke of Kentucky; Second Vice President, Debbie Butler of Virginia; Secretary, Sharon Duffy of Idaho; and Treasurer, Victor Hemphill of Louisiana. NAPUB will be commending individuals and organizations who have made current significant contributions in the area of Braille usage. Anyone with suggestions for these commendations should contact Sharon Duffy, 1218 West Fort, Boise, Idaho 83702; or call (208) 345-5244.

****Victory and Money Damages:**

Dr. Elizabeth Browne (see Braille Monitors for December, 1979; and January, 1980) has just won a significant victory, which all of the organized blind will applaud and share. She writes in part:

"Enclosed you will find a copy of the letter from the Chicago Lawyers' Committee under the Law, which informed me that the charge brought against Columbia

College, Chicago, was now proven and that a settlement had been signed.

"One year ago last January, 1983, I had been refused a job because I am blind. The individuals who denied me a part-time teaching position never questioned my qualifications but merely denied me on the basis of my blindness. I brought charges before the Illinois Human Rights Department, and in due course we went to a hearing. The persons representing the college again declared, in the presence of the Human Rights Department and my attorney Kate Grossman from the Lawyers' Committee, that the only reason I was denied the position was because of blindness. By the way, I was then and am now teaching the same course at another local college, but this fact did not alter their decision to continue to deny blind teachers.

"I received money damages and also the opportunity to demonstrate my teaching skills in the near future when other teaching commitments do not interfere."

****Heart Attack:**

Russell Wooten, Vice President of our Wyoming affiliate, was on his way from his home in Cheyenne to an NFB activity in Casper by bus when he suffered a heart attack. Deanna Morss (President of the NFB of Wyoming) reports that Russell is home and doing well. Our Wyoming affiliate is on the move and Russell Wooten is one reason for that movement. He plans to be back at work helping to build the affiliate as soon as his health permits.

****New Baby:**

At 1:00 a.m., July 14, 1984, Adam William Davis made his appearance in this world. He is the son of Dick and Pat Davis. He weighed seven pounds three ounces, and was nineteen and a half inches long. As Federationists know, Dick Davis is a member of the staff of the Iowa Commission for the Blind and a long-time Federationist. It might be noted that July 14 is Bastille Day.

RESOLUTIONS

(Note: The following resolutions were adopted at the 1984 convention of the National Federation of the Blind during the first week of July at Phoenix, Arizona.)

RESOLUTION 84-101

WHEREAS, there is widespread discrimination by lending institutions against blind persons who want to go into busi-

ness and need to borrow money; and

WHEREAS, the National Federation of the Blind is dedicated to the purpose of assisting blind persons in every possible way to achieve economic independence and first-class citizenship; and

WHEREAS, the federal Small Business Administration makes Handicapped Assistance Loans to the disabled at a current rate of three percent interest; and

WHEREAS, blind persons are often

rejected for such Handicapped Assistance Loans even when they meet all of the qualifications; Now, Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in convention assembled this seventh day of July, 1984, in Phoenix, Arizona, that (in the discretion of the President and the Board of Directors) a program to make low interest business and job related loans to qualified blind persons be established by the Federation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that (as resources permit) not only small loans in the two or three thousand dollar category be contemplated but also substantial loans in the hundred thousand dollar and higher category, the purpose being to conduct the loan program in such manner that it can become a major factor in helping the blind achieve independence and first-class citizenship.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the President and Board of Directors are (in their discretion) hereby authorized to take such actions and do such things as may be necessary to establish this program and put it into effect.

RESOLUTION 84-01

WHEREAS, a Federal Aviation Regulation (14 CFR Part 121.586) gives certified commercial air carriers the responsibility for issuing their own procedures for transporting persons who may need the assistance of someone else in exiting under emergency conditions; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to this regulation, certified commercial air carriers have developed widely varying procedures applicable to blind air travelers, addressing in different ways such mat-

ters as giving notice to the airline in advance of intended travel, providing on board special briefings and special seating of blind passengers, giving assistance to blind passengers in pre-boarding, and providing assistance on board the aircraft; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has taken a hands-off policy with regard to many features of these procedures and specifically shows no interest in requiring that the procedures do not discriminate against blind air travelers; and

WHEREAS, procedures which have been filed with the Federal Aviation Administration by certified commercial air carriers include such discriminatory features as seating restrictions on blind passengers using dog guides, requiring 72 hour advance notice of a passenger's blindness, and requiring that blind passengers should be seated next to sighted passengers of the same sex; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Aviation Administration is obliged as a matter of law and national policy to help protect blind air travelers against discrimination by certified commercial air carriers: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July, 1984, in the City of Phoenix, Arizona, that this organization deplore the hands-off policy pursued by the Federal Aviation Administration in permitting certified commercial air carriers to discriminate on the basis of blindness; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization call upon the FAA to establish reasonable and fair standards for the approval or disapproval of commer-

cial airline procedures concerning blind travelers, to this end that such procedures shall avoid the unnecessary singling out of blind air travelers and that we be shown the ordinary dignity and respect accorded other members of the traveling public.

RESOLUTION 84-02

WHEREAS, on April 4, 1984, the General Services Administration (GSA) released a memorandum outlining what it calls its "revised policy" concerning blind vendors using dog guides; and

WHEREAS, this policy permits federal building managers to require that dog guides on vending facilities be kenneled, or to impose any other requirement which a given federal building manager may deem appropriate, including matters of personal discretion in the care and managing of a dog guide, such as daily exercise; and

WHEREAS, the right of blind persons accompanied by dog guides to use all public accommodations and facilities without the imposition of additional rules or requirements arising out of the presence of the dog has been recognized by both federal and state law, for instance, the Model White Cane Law, which has been adopted in most states; and

WHEREAS, blind vendors who use dog guides are responsible for their care and management including assuring full compliance with all applicable health laws, yet, GSA's "revised policy" would usurp this responsibility and impose the dictates of building management in contravention of the rights and responsibility of each blind vendor who uses a dog guide; and

WHEREAS, the timing of GSA's "revised

policy" release and its implementation in several instances suggests that the policy may actually be an act of reprisal aimed against outspoken blind persons who have sought successfully to resist recent attempts by GSA to violate the Randolph-Sheppard Act: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July, 1984, in the City of Phoenix, Arizona, that this organization condemn and deplore this "revised policy" of the General Services Administration and insist upon immediate withdrawal; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization take the position that the manner of use and maintenance of a dog guide by a vendor on his or her vending facility be left entirely within that vendor's discretion so long as compliance with applicable health laws is maintained.

RESOLUTION 84-03

WHEREAS, the United States Secretary of Education has the legal responsibility for leadership in coordinating federal agency compliance with the Randolph-Sheppard Act; and

WHEREAS, on December 28, 1983, the General Services Administration (GSA) violated the act by soliciting bids from fast food restaurant chains in a manner that did not give priority to the blind for cafeteria space as required, yet, the Department of Education was not apprised in advance of GSA's action and later, after the solicitation became common knowledge, the Department of Education took no effective action to compel compliance with the law; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Education was similarly not consulted when the United States Army and Air Force recently decided to set-up Burger King franchises at post exchange locations on military bases; and

WHEREAS, the incidences are only part of a trend of non-caring and lax administration by the Department of Education in failing to fulfill its responsibilities under the Randolph-Sheppard Act; Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July, 1984, in the City of Phoenix, Arizona, that this organization insist upon vigorous enforcement of the mandates of the Randolph-Sheppard Act, consistent with the Department of Education's lead agency roll; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is hereby urged to adopt such rules and take other action necessary to avoid erosion of the blind priority for vending facilities on all federal property.

RESOLUTION 84-04

WHEREAS, it is the policy of this organization that exemption for blind persons from charges for the use of telephone Directory Assistance is a reasonable and necessary means of mitigating the inconvenience for such persons in using print telephone directories; and

WHEREAS, all states in which Directory Assistance charges have been imposed on telephone customers have exempted blind customers from these charges; and

WHEREAS, such exemptions enable blind persons to obtain telephone information

needed in the pursuit of their employment and personal activities; and

WHEREAS, in a tariff recently approved by the Federal Communication Commission (FCC), the American Telephone and Telegraph Company (AT&T) is allowed to charge for long distance Directory Assistance, but may not do so with respect to long distance Directory Assistance calls made from the home telephone of anyone who may be exempt from local Directory Assistance charges; and

WHEREAS, in AT&T's tariff, the current exemption for blind persons to obtain long distance Directory Assistance Service without charge is inadequate, because (1) the exemption is not nationwide since local operating companies in all states do not impose Directory Assistance charges, hence, there is no local exemption, the result being that AT&T may charge locally non-exempt blind customers for long distance Directory Assistance, (2) the exemption is not portable since it includes only the home telephone, and (3) the exemption is not universal, since other long distance telephone networks may soon begin to offer long distance Directory Assistance Service; and

WHEREAS, exempting blind telephone users from long distance Directory Assistance charges should be an industry-wide policy followed by all local or long distance operating companies: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July, 1984, in the City of Phoenix, Arizona, that this organization call upon the American Telephone and Telegraph Company (AT&T) and any other long distance Directory

Assistance Service to exempt blind persons from long distance Directory Assistance charges to make this exemption available to all blind persons throughout the nation, rather than dependent on state practice and to give blind persons a portable exemption by means of a credit card which would allow the exemption when using any telephone; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization call upon the Federal Communications Commission to institute rulemaking proceedings aimed at insuring that the exemption from long distance Directory Assistance charges for all blind persons is expanded in the respects set forth above; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization call upon all state regulatory agencies having regulatory authority over the in-state activities of AT&T to take appropriate action to insure that analagous exemptions from Directory Assistance charges, including those for long distance Directory Assistance calls within the state, be granted to blind persons within their respective states; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be sent to AT&T, other long distance service providers, local operating companies (when appropriate), the FCC, and state regulatory agencies.

RESOLUTION 84-05

WHEREAS, it is well documented that the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Program, giving priority for Federal contracts to sheltered workshops, is subject to serious abuse; and

WHEREAS, previous inattention on the

part of Congress to the administration of the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Program has led to provable second-class treatment of blind shop workers by sheltered workshops which are managed by well-paid sighted administrators; and

WHEREAS, in the 98th Congress, the Subcommittee on Manpower and Housing of the Committee on Government Operations of the United States House of Representatives undertook a thorough investigation of the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Program, finding among other things that workshops fail to hire blind persons in management positions, that rates of pay are not properly monitored or enforced in accordance with the law, that National Industries for the Blind is not held accountable for its spending policies, and that NIB has misused program funds in a campaign of resistance against labor unions: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July, 1984, in the City of Phoenix, Arizona, that this organization commend and loudly applaud leaders in the House of Representatives responsible for disclosing the facts which show that the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Program is not now being administered responsibly so as to safeguard the interests and rights of the blind; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization call upon the Committee on Labor and Human Resources of the United States Senate to undertake a thorough investigation into the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Program, similar to that conducted in the House of Representatives, and to recommend legislation aimed at redirecting the program toward achieving better jobs, pay equity, and more responsible management on behalf of the

blind.

RESOLUTION 84-06

WHEREAS, an investigation conducted during the First Session of the 98th Congress by the House of Representatives Committee on Government Operations, Subcommittee on Manpower and Housing, disclosed that National Industries for the Blind (NIB) had spent at least \$50,000 on litigation to block labor organizing by blind workers in NIB affiliated workshops; and

WHEREAS, based on NIB's misuse of program funds, Congressional investigators found that it is improper for any entity in the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Program to use funds for anti-labor activities, yet workshops for the blind participating in the program continue to pay for labor busting efforts; and

WHEREAS, an example of continued funding of anti-labor activities is the establishment of a litigation fund by the General Council of Workshops for the Blind, used on at least one occasion during the past year to pay legal fees in connection with intervening on the side of management in a labor dispute at the Raleigh Lions Clinic for the Blind, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, the Raleigh incident is merely a back door method which workshops in NIB have arranged to continue funding their campaigns against labor organizing by blind workers in NIB affiliated workshops: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July, 1984, in the City of Phoenix, Arizona, that this organization condemn and deplore the continued use of funds generated in the

Javits-Wagner-O'Day program for anti-labor purposes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization call upon the Committee for Purchase from the Blind and Other Severely Handicapped, as the federal agency responsible for administration of the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Program, to direct that sheltered workshops and any other administering or participating entity (including the General Council of Workshops for the Blind, on behalf of workshops) must cease all funding directly or indirectly for activities which are related in any way to taking sides in matters of organized labor.

RESOLUTION 84-07

WHEREAS, Congress is considering legislation entitled the "Supplemental Security Income Equitable Improvements and Reform Amendments of 1984," introduced in the House of Representatives as H.R. 5341 by the Honorable Fortney Stark, and introduced in the United States Senate as S. 2569 by the Honorable Daniel Patrick Moynihan; and

WHEREAS, this legislation has merit as an overall effort to update several provisions of the Supplemental Security Income program which deserve periodic re-evaluation to take account of experience in the operation of the program as well as the effects of inflation where applicable; and

WHEREAS, the improvements called for in this legislation include increases in resource limits for all SSI recipients, benefit increases for institutionalized persons, the option to retain SSI rather than converting to Social Security or another income maintenance program in instances where the conversion would be

to the disadvantage of a recipient, limitations on the rate of recovery of overpayments, and provisions designed to improve notices of the Social Security Administration sent to SSI recipients; and

WHEREAS, H.R. 5341 and S. 2569 represent constructive efforts to improve and update SSI, however, additional changes should be included such as increasing the amounts of exempted income, especially to encourage work attempts by SSI recipients, and placing exempt income and resource limits under annual cost of living increase requirements to insure that these provisions do not lose their value in the future: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July, 1984, in the City of Phoenix, Arizona, that this organization urge the House Committee on Ways and Means and the Senate Committee on Finance to report their respective SSI equitable improvements and reform bills as soon as possible, including amendments along the lines proposed in this resolution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we call upon all members of Congress and responsible officials in the Reagan Administration to support adoption of the "Supplemental Security Income Equitable Improvements and Reform Amendments of 1984" before adjournment of the Second Session of the 98th Congress.

RESOLUTION 84-08

WHEREAS, many blind persons have encountered discrimination in the purchase of life and health insurance, including imposition of higher rates, denial of riders such as waiver of premium and

accidental death benefits, and denial of life and/or health insurance altogether; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable Jim Bates of California and the Honorable Charles Mathias of Maryland have introduced the Fair Insurance Coverage Act (H.R. 4642 and S. 2775 in the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate, respectively), legislation banning all such discrimination by insurance companies in the absence of actuarial statistics showing that blind persons are higher risks by reason of blindness; and

WHEREAS, on June 27, 1984, the Subcommittee on Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism of the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the United States House of Representatives conducted hearings on H.R. 4642: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this sixth of July, 1984, in the City of Phoenix, Arizona, that this organization commend and loudly applaud Representative Bates and Senator Mathias for their efforts on behalf of all blind persons; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization urge the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the United States House of Representatives and the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee of the United States Senate to report these measures favorably so that they may be considered and enacted into law.

RESOLUTION 84-09

WHEREAS, the United States Supreme Court's ruling in Grove City College et al. v. Terrel H. Bell, Secretary of

Education, et al. threatens to restrict the scope of the government's enforcement of all federal civil rights, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, covering federally assisted institutions and groups; and

WHEREAS, the Grove City decision gives recipients of federal assistance the opportunity to evade compliance with federal civil rights mandates through administrative maneuvering of funds and the use of creative accounting procedures to exclude most of their programs and activities from federal scrutiny; and

WHEREAS, recognizing this, the United States House of Representatives recently approved H.R. 5490, "The Civil Rights Act of 1984", designed to reinstate a broad application of civil rights requirements by considering any federal assistance to be recipient-wide, rather than program specific; and

WHEREAS, similar legislation is now pending in the United States Senate in the form of S. 2568, along with H.R. 5490, now referred to the Senate from the House, but the Senate has yet to act on this measure or any related bill to continue civil rights protection in the face of the Grove City decision; and

WHEREAS, failure by both houses of Congress to respond to the Supreme Court's narrowing of civil rights enforcement will mean the virtual annihilation of civil rights protection intended to be granted under Section 504 and other civil rights laws: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July, 1984, in the City of Phoenix, Arizona, that this

organization urge the United States Senate to approve "The Civil Rights Act of 1984" in order to assure that civil rights protection is extended under all programs and activities conducted by recipients of federal financial assistance.

RESOLUTION 84-11

WHEREAS, the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind's reluctance to recognize the legitimate claims of organizations of the blind for equal representation, and in response to the continued rebuffs and to undemocratic decisions arrived at in closed and/or secret meetings, the National Federation of the Blind in 1962 adopted a series of resolutions to redress these grievances; and

WHEREAS, one of those resolutions declared that: "We instruct our President, our delegate to the WCWB, and our Executive Committee to take all such actions in such manner and in such times as seem to them most meet and feasible and supported by such resources as are available to bring about the establishment" of an organization which would provide an "effective world agency or instrumentality through which they may represent themselves," and take such actions as are necessary to solve their problems; and

WHEREAS, between 1962 and 1964 our protestations on the matter of equality were met by further devious actions and lip service about "adequate" representation; and

WHEREAS, during the 1964 Convention in Phoenix, the President, the Executive Committee, and the Convention moved to implement the 1962 Resolutions and went

forward with the formation of the International Federation of the Blind, assisted by many of the delegates of foreign organizations of the blind who were present; and

WHEREAS, for some years the IFB continued to grow and to carry out various projects to improve the lives of the blind worldwide; and

WHEREAS, the WCWB from the beginnings of IFB exerted such pressure as it could on existing entities and on the governments which in many cases have to approve formation of new organizations, to limit the independent activities of such groups of the blind; and

WHEREAS, the WCWB by various maneuvers and inducements, not only encouraged the IFB to meet at the same place, and later at the same time as WCWB, but also began to urge the merger of the two organizations; and

WHEREAS, as of the present time, many officers of the IFB also serve as officers of WCWB, an organization which frequently works at cross purposes to the goals of the IFB; and

WHEREAS, funding for the IFB has come since 1974 from one source and in such proportion as to overwhelm all others; and

WHEREAS, of later years, many of the organizations which have joined the IFB are in their nature administrative arms managing programs for the blind in their respective countries, with membership organizations only as adjuncts; and

WHEREAS, with continued pressure from WCWB, as well as some IFB members, to merge activities, the two organizations have reached the point where this compelling influence has constrained development of IFB to the point of confusion and paralysis; and

WHEREAS, the IFB today no longer meets the criteria set out at its founding; namely, to be an organization of the blind of all nations, operated by the blind of all nations for the blind of all nations; speaking for themselves and looking to more effective participation in the affairs of their respective nations; dedicated solely to serving the common needs and aspirations of blind men and women everywhere in the world; and

WHEREAS, Sheik Abdullah Al-Ghanim, Saudi Arabian organizer of the 1984 General Assembly, has declared Rami Rabby, the democratically elected Secretary of the National Federation of the Blind and Executive Committee Member of the IFB, persona non grata and has placed Rabby's name on that country's blacklist for reasons unrelated to the purposes of the conference, such actions flying in the face of a specific IFB Constitutional prohibition against the injection of irrelevant political considerations into the affairs of an organization devoted exclusively to the welfare of the blind: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July, 1984, in the City of Phoenix, Arizona, that because of this arbitrary, capricious, and unacceptable misconduct, this organization herewith officially withdraw from membership in the International Federation of the Blind; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization empower the President and the Board of Directors of the National Federation of the Blind to rescind this action should they determine either at the outset of the IFB General Assembly or before that, that the IFB intends to

make a good faith effort to reverse the course it has followed in recent years and reestablish itself as a viable independent spokesman for the blind of the world.

RESOLUTION 84-12

WHEREAS, Dr. Wolfgang Preiser of the University of New Mexico proposes to develop and install electronic guidance systems for the blind, based on the belief that blind people can not travel independently through open spaces; and

WHEREAS, the Preiser System, with its electronic cane and wires implanted in the floor or other walking surface, promotes the erroneous and harmful notion that the blind wander about without direction, in fear of being hopelessly lost; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Preiser now proposes to carry forward his research with the aid of federal revenues from the United States Department of Education, National Institute for Handicapped Research (NIHR); and

WHEREAS, NIHR has limited resources and an important mission to sponsor meaningful research not including misguided guidance systems that mislead the blind and the sighted public-at-large: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July, 1984, in the City of Phoenix, Arizona, that this organization strongly oppose Preiser's electronic guidance system for the blind, a system and concept lacking practical utility and devoid of any social merit; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, in furtherance of the position expressed in

this resolution, we urge responsible officials of the National Institute for Handicapped Research to join with the blind in soundly rejecting Dr. Preiser's misguided project.

RESOLUTION 84-13

WHEREAS, the United States Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (ATBCB) is sponsoring and paying for research in detectable, tactile surface treatments and signage for visually impaired persons; and

WHEREAS, this research is based on the premise that ordinary surface treatments and signs pose architectural barriers to successful, independent travel by the blind; and

WHEREAS, it is the collective experience of the blind that ordinary surface treatments and signs do not compromise either the safety or efficiency of blind travelers and that modifications are unnecessary and harmful; and

WHEREAS, the ATBCB's legitimate mission is and should remain the removal of real and significant physical barriers which block access to public buildings and facilities and modes of transportation by persons with disabilities other than the blind; and

WHEREAS, in addition to promoting the removal of architectural and transportation barriers, the ATBCB's legal mandate includes removing attitudinal barriers, hence, the Board must necessarily guard against taking actions which reinforce negative social attitudes about the blind; and

WHEREAS, research into these non-existent surface treatment and signage barriers fosters false notions that blind people are dependant and need

extra care when traveling in public buildings, on subways and other transportation systems, and in all other common environments: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July, 1984, in the City of Phoenix, Arizona, that this organization oppose further research in detectable tactile surface treatments and signage and declare such research to be a detrimental waste of federal funds; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we encourage the ATBCB to pursue with vigor its important legal mandate to prevent and remove actual architectural and attitudinal barriers that block entrance by handicapped persons otherwise unable to gain access to public buildings, public facilities, and modes of public transportation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we call upon the proprietors of public buildings and the operators of public transportation systems to direct their efforts toward removing real barriers to access by handicapped persons and cease all plans to address the false barriers identified in this resolution.

RESOLUTION 84-14

WHEREAS, there is an increased effort by publishers of magazines to invite the readership to respond to articles and special interest columns through Letters to the Editor; and

WHEREAS, many said magazines require the page number of the article or special interest column to be included in the Letters to the Editor in order for the reader's opinion to be considered for publication in the magazine; and

WHEREAS, there are numerous other situations where it is desirable and often necessary for a blind person to know page numbers, including research, reference, and correlation with printed materials; and

WHEREAS, Brailled and recorded magazines do not currently make any reference to inkprint page numbers; and

WHEREAS, the National Federation of the Blind has requested the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) to include inkprint page numbers on which articles and special interest columns appear and NLS has refused saying that "(a)t this time the justification for changing does not appear to warrant the confusion that well might ensue when print page numbers ... do not conform to the page numbers in the Braille text"; and

WHEREAS, including print page numbers in Brailled and recorded texts can be done very simply and need not cause any confusion whatsoever; and

WHEREAS, a change is justified because the exclusion of any reference to the inkprint page number prevents blind persons from the equal opportunity to have Letters to the Editor considered for publication; Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this sixth day of July, 1984, in the City of Phoenix, Arizona, that this organization hereby request the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped to develop a satisfactory system of number references to inkprint pages; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NLS work with the National Federation of the Blind to achieve this much needed change in format.

RESOLUTION 84-15

WHEREAS, a brochure which was distributed by Frontier Airlines on June 30, 1984, entitled "Frontier Airlines Flight Information for Blind Passengers" contains the following language, "You have been seated in an area that will help us make a safe and rapid evacuation. We ask that you remain seated until the initial flow of passengers has passed you. By permitting other passengers to evacuate first, we will be in a better position to help you, if necessary; and

WHEREAS, the brochure continues, "... In addition, you are responsible for your own lavatory needs; flight attendants are not able to assist"; and

WHEREAS, this brochure is insulting, demeaning, and arrogant; and

WHEREAS, through negotiation with the National Federation of the Blind Frontier Airlines agreed more than a year ago to withdraw this highly offensive and discriminatory brochure from circulation and to use a rational flight brochure which had been jointly developed by Frontier Airlines and the National Federation of the Blind and which is being distributed on some flights; and

WHEREAS, the continued use by Frontier Airlines of this discriminatory brochure indicates a lack of concern at best and perhaps negligence or even worse—a wanton and willful disregard of the civil rights of blind air travelers: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July, 1984, in the City of Phoenix, Arizona, that this organization call upon Frontier Airlines to implement its promise to withdraw

from circulation all copies of this offensive and discriminatory brochure and to distribute immediately, for use on all of its aircraft, the brochure developed jointly by Frontier Airlines and the National Federation of the Blind.

RESOLUTION 84-16

WHEREAS, many state vocational rehabilitation agencies have clamored long and loud that there are less funds now available to provide benefits for blind clients as conceived by the mistaken belief that the present administration carried out its promise to drastically reduce federal funding for human resource programs; and

WHEREAS, the agency outcry has been accepted as gospel by state legislators, the public, and individual blind persons seeking program services who have been led to believe the "sorry, no funds available now" statement; and

WHEREAS, this misinformation has brought about drastically reduced services, resulting in either no services, long waiting lists with delays often over a year in duration, and a more stringent means test; and

WHEREAS, the National Federation of the Blind, through its diligent efforts in working with the Congress and administrators of rehabilitation programs, has been successful in not only preventing reductions in federal funds available to the states, but has increased the level of funding from \$817,000,000 to just over one billion dollars during the past four years; and

WHEREAS, the 1982 revisions of the Social Security Act have had ample time for implementation by the state rehabil-

itation agencies, thus providing the states with a blanket line of credit whereby all costs are paid for any person who is successfully placed in employment yet, in some states, this placement function is no longer a provision of services by the rehabilitation agency, but it is left to the individual person to find employment for himself: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July, 1984, in the City of Phoenix, Arizona, that this organization demand honesty of state agencies serving the blind concerning their justification for service denial or reduction.

RESOLUTION 84-17

WHEREAS, it is generally accepted that parents of blind children need to have accurate, realistic, and philosophically sound information about blindness so that they may develop sound expectations and confidence in the abilities of their blind children; and

WHEREAS, the National Federation of the Blind, as the largest and oldest consumer organization of the blind in this nation, has the most realistic and accurate information and understanding about blindness; and

WHEREAS, since our founding in 1940, we of the National Federation of the Blind have assisted parents of blind children, have worked to improve the opportunities of blind children at all levels—local, state, and national—and have demonstrated our commitment to and expertise in the education of blind children; and

WHEREAS, the National Federation of

the Blind and its Parents of Blind Children Division have developed books such as a RESOURCE GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND EDUCATORS OF BLIND CHILDREN by Doris Willoughby, and FUTURE REFLECTIONS, the most widely read magazine for parents of blind children in the nation; and

WHEREAS, the National Federation of the Blind and its Parents of Blind Children Division engages in numerous other activities on behalf of parents of blind children at the local, state, and national levels; and

WHEREAS, the Hadley School for the Blind recently has joined hands with the American Foundation for the Blind in producing a correspondence course for parents of blind infants; and

WHEREAS, the Hadley School for the Blind is well aware of the profound philosophical differences and conflict between the National Federation of the Blind and the American Foundation for the Blind, and yet proceeded with this particular action without seeking input from or consultation with the National Federation of the Blind, the largest consumer organization of the blind in the country; and

WHEREAS, the material developed by the AFB for this course reflects their regressive and incorrect premises about the nature of blindness, as well as their bias against the organized blind, thus providing harmful and false information to parents: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July, 1984, in the City of Phoenix, Arizona, that this organization condemn and deplore this hasty and unwise partnership between Hadley School for the Blind and the

American Foundation for the Blind and the development and distribution of this correspondence course for parents of blind children; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we call upon the Hadley School for the Blind to work with qualified members of the National Federation of the Blind to develop quality course materials for the parents of blind children.

RESOLUTION 84-18

WHEREAS, the number of blind vending facility operators in Wyoming has decreased from ten in 1979 to zero in 1984; and

WHEREAS, the Director of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in Wyoming, the agency with responsibility to administer the Business Enterprise Program under the Randolph-Sheppard Act, has stated publicly that the purpose of the program is not for "viable employment," but should be for training the handicapped—thus, demonstrating a total lack of understanding of and disregard for the provision of the federal Randolph-Sheppard Act; and

WHEREAS, no new vending facilities in Wyoming have been opened in recent years, but several have been closed; and

WHEREAS, a non-blind, physically handicapped man has been temporarily (for two and one-half years) operating a vending facility in the federal building in Casper, and his earnings have been erroneously reported to the Rehabilitation Services Administration as earnings by the blind; and

WHEREAS, blind persons have not been informed about or encouraged to participate in the Business Enterprise Program for the Blind in Wyoming; and

WHEREAS, training for the Business Enterprise Program is not offered to the blind within the state; and

WHEREAS, such a trend in one state may have detrimental effects in other states: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July, 1984, in the City of Phoenix, Arizona, that this organization call upon the State of Wyoming to change its practices under the Randolph-Sheppard Act and to establish and impliment legal and beneficial programs for the blind; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we call upon the Federal Department of Education to examine the practices of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in the State of Wyoming and to direct it to correct all errors that are being made.

RESOLUTION 84-19

WHEREAS, the National Federation of the Blind has over 50,000 members, the majority of whom together with their spouses and other family members are registered voters who will vote in the 1984 Presidential Election; and

WHEREAS, blind people, their friends and their family members who will vote in the 1984 Presidential Election are necessarily concerned that the Presidential candidate of their choice supports needed reforms in federal programs and laws aimed at improving the social status and equality of the blind, although the Federation as an organization does not engage in partisan political activity; and

WHEREAS, the Presidential candidates have so far not expressed their posi-

tions specifically on the issues of public policy of greatest direct and immediate concern to the blind: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July, 1984, in the City of Phoenix, Arizona, that this organization request position statements from the Presidential candidates in the 1984 election relating to the following specific issues:

1. Does the candidate support reform of the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act in ways which will give job equality and pay equity (including minimum wage) to the blind and improvement of the management of the program for the benefit of blind shop workers, and does the candidate pledge to work for such reforms?

2. Does the candidate support banning employment discrimination against the blind by amending Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and pledge to work for such an amendment?

3. Does the candidate support vigorous application and rigorous enforcement of the priority for blind persons to operate vending facilities on all federal property under the Randolph-Sheppard Act and pledge to direct such initiatives?

4. Does the candidate support enactment by Congress of the Fair Insurance Coverage Act designed to place a federal ban on discrimination against the blind by insurance companies and pledge to work for its enactment?; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution together with relevant background materials and issue papers shall be distributed to the 1984 Presidential Candidates and that each shall be informed that this organization will distribute widely to the blind and

their friends each candidate's response or non-response to these issues in advance of the November election.

RESOLUTION 84-20

WHEREAS, during the past forty years, hundreds of millions of dollars have been allocated to provide federal financial assistance for state rehabilitation agencies; and

WHEREAS, these funds have been intended to provide vocational training to blind and disabled persons; and

WHEREAS, a majority of these funds are expended for staff salaries rather than on providing vocational training services; and

WHEREAS, the vocational training services available to blind persons are arbitrarily and capriciously limited by state rehabilitation agencies which force blind persons to accept vocational training services only in programs and facilities approved by that state agency; and

WHEREAS, the organized blind are no longer willing to accept substandard treatment in services: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July, 1984, in the City of Phoenix, Arizona, that the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 be amended to assure that blind persons have the opportunity to choose the programs and services to meet their vocational and training needs.

RESOLUTION 84-21

WHEREAS, since his term in the United States Senate began in 1979, Senator Paul E. Tsongas of Massachusetts has

proved himself to be a vocal and effective advocate for positive social change; and

WHEREAS, in recent years, Senator Tsongas has been a leader in promoting the welfare of the blind in the truest sense; and

WHEREAS, although he has helped the blind of this nation in many ways, he is best known for twice introducing Senate bills to amend the "Fair Labor Standards Act" which would have protected blind persons by a statutory minimum wage; and

WHEREAS, by introducing this legislation, Senator Tsongas has made the clearest possible declaration that he believes in the ultimate purpose of the National Federation of the Blind—the attainment of full equality and genuine first-class status for all blind Americans; and

WHEREAS, in addition, Senator Tsongas supported the Federation's effort to obtain from the United States Department of Education some much needed changes in the regulations promulgated under the Randolph-Sheppard Act, realizing that the availability of productive employment for the blind is a critical concern of the organization; and

WHEREAS, Senator Tsongas will not be seeking election to a second term in the United States Senate; and

WHEREAS, this means that the blind of this nation will be losing a true friend in the Congress: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July, 1984, in the City of Phoenix, Arizona, that this organization express its highest official praise to Senator Paul E. Tsongas for his performance in the Senate on

behalf of all blind Americans.

RESOLUTION 84-22

WHEREAS, most air carriers have initiated a policy of refusing to transport deaf-blind people unless they are accompanied by a guide-interpreter; and

WHEREAS, although some deaf-blind people find it convenient and preferable to travel with a companion, many find it necessary or desirable to travel alone for business or pleasure; and

WHEREAS, the reason given for such arbitrary and arrogant behavior, safety, is based upon incorrect perceptions and negative attitudes toward the deaf-blind; and

WHEREAS, this behavior on the part of the airlines is a flagrant abridgement of the civil rights of deaf-blind people: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July, 1984, in the City of Phoenix, Arizona, that this Federation condemn and deplore the policy of any air carrier which requires a guide-interpreter; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Federation take all necessary steps to protect the civil rights of deaf-blind air travelers.

RESOLUTION 84-23

WHEREAS, Recording for the Blind (RFB) is the largest producer of taped materials for the blind for educational and vocational purposes; and

WHEREAS, blind people need to be able to buy some of these materials at the cost of producing them for reference and research and other purposes and not be

limited only to borrowing them; and

WHEREAS, some other producers of recorded materials for the blind have found it possible to make such materials available for sale to the blind at the cost of the tapes, plus a fee for duplication; and

WHEREAS, RFB unnecessarily uses copyright laws as an excuse for its narrow policy of loans only; and

WHEREAS, the intent of the copyright laws regarding taping of books is to prevent unauthorized commercial profit from selling tapes, and not the provision of a limited number of copies to the blind at cost; and

WHEREAS, most of the materials in question are not available from any source other than RFB; and

WHEREAS, a large number of members of the National Federation of the Blind

regularly use materials provided by Recording for the Blind: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July, 1984, in the City of Phoenix, Arizona, that we call upon Recording for the Blind to change its policy and to make it possible for blind students and professionals to purchase taped materials at cost, in addition to being able to borrow them; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we request officials of Recording for the Blind to meet with representatives of the Student Division of the National Federation of the Blind to review all Recording for the Blind policies and make amendments where needed to improve services to the blind.

CONSTITUTION OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND AS AMENDED 1984

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this organization is The National Federation of the Blind.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The purpose of The National Federation of the Blind is to promote the security and social welfare of the blind.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Section A. The membership of The National Federation of the Blind shall consist of the members of the state affiliates plus members at large. Members at large shall have the same rights, privileges, and responsibilities in The National Federation of the Blind as those exercised by members of state affiliates.

The Board of Directors shall establish procedures for admission of members at large, determine how many classes of

such members shall be established, and determine the annual dues to be paid by members of each class.

Section B. Each state or territorial possession of the United States, including the District of Columbia, having an affiliate shall have one vote at the National Convention and shall be referred to hereinafter as state affiliates.

Section C. Affiliates shall be organizations of the blind, controlled by the blind.

Section D. The Board of Directors shall establish procedures for the admission of new state affiliates. There shall be only one affiliate in each state.

Section E. Any member, local chapter, or state affiliate of this organization may be suspended, expelled, or otherwise disciplined for misconduct or for activity unbecoming to a member or affiliate of this organization by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors or by a simple majority of the states present and voting at a National Convention. If the action is to be taken by the Board, there must be good cause, and a good faith effort must have been made to try to resolve the problem by discussion and negotiation. If the action is to be taken by the Convention, notice must be given on the preceding day at an open Board meeting or a session of the Convention. If a dispute arises as to whether there was "good cause," or whether the Board made a "good faith effort," the National Convention (acting in its capacity as the supreme authority of the Federation) shall have the power

to make final disposition of the matter; but until or unless the Board's action is reversed by the National Convention, the ruling of the Board shall continue in effect.

**ARTICLE IV.
OFFICERS, BOARD OF DIRECTORS,
AND ADVISORY BOARD,
NATIONAL FEDERATION
OF THE BLIND**

Section A. The officers of The National Federation of the Blind shall consist of (1) President, (2) First Vice President, (3) Second Vice President, (4) Secretary, and (5) Treasurer. They shall be elected biennially.

Section B. The officers shall be elected by majority vote of the state affiliates present and voting at a National Convention.

Section C. The National Federation of the Blind shall have a Board of Directors, which shall be composed of the five officers and twelve additional members, six of whom shall be elected at the Annual Convention during even numbered years and six of whom shall be elected at the Annual Convention during odd numbered years. The members of the Board of Directors shall serve for two-year terms.

Section D. The Board of Directors may in its discretion create an Advisory Board, National Federation of the Blind, and determine the composition, duties, and qualifications of the members of the Advisory Board.

Section E. No person receiving regular

substantial financial compensation from The National Federation of the Blind shall be an elected officer or member of the Board of Directors.

**ARTICLE V.
POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE
CONVENTION, THE BOARD
OF DIRECTORS, AND
THE PRESIDENT**

Section A. Powers and Duties of the Convention. The Convention is the supreme authority of the Federation. It is the legislature of the Federation. As such, it has final authority with respect to all issues of policy. Its decisions shall be made after opportunity has been afforded for full and fair discussion. Delegates, members, and all blind persons in attendance may participate in all Convention discussions as a matter of right. Any member of the Federation may make or second motions, propose nominations, and serve on committees; and is eligible for election to office, except that only blind members may hold elective office. Voting and making motions by proxy are prohibited. Consistent with the democratic character of the Federation, Convention meetings shall be so conducted as to prevent parliamentary maneuvers which would have the effect of interfering with the expression of the will of the majority on any question, or with the rights of the minority to full and fair presentation of their views. The Convention is not merely a gathering of representatives of separate state organizations. It is a meeting of the Federation at the national level in its character as a national organization. Committees of the Federation are committees of the national

organization. The nominating committee shall consist of one member from each state affiliate represented at the Convention.

Section B. Powers and Duties of the Board of Directors. The function of the Board of Directors as the governing body of the Federation between Conventions is to make policies when necessary and not in conflict with the policies adopted by the Convention. Policy decisions which can reasonably be postponed until the next meeting of the National Convention shall not be made by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall serve as a credentials committee. It shall have the power to deal with organizational problems presented to it by any member or affiliate, shall decide appeals regarding the validity of elections in state or local affiliates, and shall certify the credentials of delegates when questions regarding the validity of such credentials arise. By a two-thirds vote the Board may suspend one of its members for violation of a policy of the organization or for other action unbecoming to a member of the Federation. By a two-thirds vote the Board may reorganize any state or local affiliate. The Board may not suspend one of its own members or reorganize a state or local affiliate except for good cause and after a good faith effort has been made to try to resolve the problem by discussion and negotiation. If a dispute arises as to whether there was "good cause" or whether the Board made a "good faith effort," the National Convention (acting in its capacity as the supreme authority of the Federation) shall have the power to make final disposition of the matter; but until or

unless the Board's action is reversed by the National Convention, the ruling of the Board shall continue in effect. At each meeting, the Board of Directors shall receive a report from the President on the operations of the Federation. There shall be a standing subcommittee of the Board of Directors which shall consist of three members. The committee shall be known as the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance. It shall, whenever it deems necessary, recommend to the Board of Directors principles of budgeting, accounting procedures, and methods of financing the Federation program; and shall consult with the President on major expenditures.

The Board of Directors shall meet at the time of each National Convention. It shall hold other meetings on the call of the President or on the written request of any five members.

Section C. Powers and Duties of the President. The President is the principal administrative officer of the Federation. In this capacity his duties consist of: carrying out the policies adopted by the Convention; conducting the day-to-day management of the affairs of the Federation; authorizing expenditures from the Federation treasury in accordance with and in implementation of the policies established by the Convention; appointing all committees of the Federation except the Board of Directors; coordinating all activities of the Federation including the work of other officers and of committees; hiring, supervising, and when necessary, dismissing staff members and other employees of the Federation, and determining their numbers and compensation; taking all administrative actions necessary and

proper to put into effect the programs and accomplish the purposes of the Federation.

The implementation and administration of the interim policies adopted by the Board of Directors is the responsibility of the President as principal administrative officer of the Federation.

ARTICLE VI. STATE AFFILIATES

Any organized group desiring to become a state affiliate of The National Federation of the Blind shall apply for affiliation by submitting to the President of The National Federation of the Blind a copy of its constitution and a list of the names and addresses of its elected officers. Under procedures to be established by the Board of Directors, action shall be taken on the application. If the action is affirmative, The National Federation of the Blind shall issue to the organization a charter of affiliation. Upon request of the National President the state affiliate shall, from time to time, provide to the National President the names and addresses of its members. Copies of all amendments to the constitution and/or bylaws of an affiliate shall be sent without delay to the National President. No organization shall be accepted as an affiliate and no organization shall remain an affiliate unless at least a majority of its voting members are blind. The president, vice-president (or vice-presidents), and at least a majority of the executive committee or board of directors of the state affiliate and of all of its local chapters must be blind. Affiliates must not merely be social organizations but must formulate programs and actively work to

promote the economic and social betterment of the blind. Affiliates must comply with the provisions of the Constitution of the Federation. Policy decisions of the Federation are binding upon all affiliates, and the affiliate must participate affirmatively in carrying out such policy decisions. The name **National Federation of the Blind, Federation of the Blind**, or any variant thereof is the property of The National Federation of the Blind; and any affiliate, or local chapter of an affiliate, which ceases to be part of The National Federation of the Blind (for whatever reason) shall forthwith forfeit the right to use the name **National Federation of the Blind, Federation of the Blind**, or any variant thereof.

A general convention of the membership of an affiliate or of the elected delegates of the membership must be held and its principal executive officers must be elected at least once every two years. There can be no closed membership. Proxy voting is prohibited in state and local affiliates. Each affiliate must have a written constitution or bylaws setting forth its structure, the authority of its officers, and the basic procedures which it will follow. No publicly contributed funds may be divided among the membership of an affiliate on the basis of membership, and (upon request from the National Office) an affiliate must present an accounting of all of its receipts and expenditures. An affiliate which fails to be represented at three consecutive National Conventions may be considered to be inactive, and may be suspended as an affiliate by the Board of Directors. The affiliate must not indulge in attacks upon the officers, Board mem-

bers, leaders, or members of the Federation or upon the organization itself outside of the organization, and must not allow its officers or members to indulge in such attacks. This requirement shall not be interpreted to interfere with the right of an affiliate or its officers or members to carry on a political campaign inside the Federation for election to office or to achieve policy changes. No affiliate may join or support, or allow its officers or members to join or support, any temporary or permanent organization inside the Federation which has not received the sanction and approval of the Federation.

ARTICLE VII. ASSESSMENTS

Each state affiliate shall pay an annual assessment of \$30. Assessments shall be payable in advance on or before January 1.

Any state affiliate which is in arrears with its assessment at the time of the National Convention shall be denied the right to vote.

ARTICLE VIII. DISSOLUTION

In the event of dissolution, all assets of the organization shall be given to an organization with similar purposes which has received a 501(c)(3) certification by the Internal Revenue Service.

ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended at any regular Annual Convention of the Federation by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the states registered, present, and voting. Provided further: that the proposed amendment must be

signed by five member states in good presented to the President the day be-
standing and that it must have been fore final action by the Convention.

THE BRAILLE MONITOR

1800 JOHNSON STREET
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21230

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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